

# CINEMA

85

## *Papers*



### INTERVIEWS

JOCELYN MOORHOUSE

TALKS ABOUT 'PROOF'

BLAKE EDWARDS: 'SWITCH'

CALLIE KHOURI: 'THELMA & LOUISE'

### SPECIAL

INDEPENDENT EXHIBITION AND

DISTRIBUTION IN AUSTRALIA:

REPORT AND INTERVIEWS

### PLUS

THE AFC AND FFC RESPOND

ALL-TIME FAVOURITE FILMS

ANDREY TARKOVSKY / LEE REMICK

'THE COMMITMENTS' / FORM & SPECIAL FX

ELLEN BURGIN IN  
BLAKE EDWARDS' 'SWITCH'



Steve and Walter  
used to have  
a preference  
for blondes.

Then Steve  
was murdered...  
and came back  
as one.

Will being  
a woman  
make him  
a better man?

ELLEN BARKIN  
IN  
BLAKE EDWARDS'

# switch

JIMMY SMITS  
JOBETH WILLIAMS  
LORRAINE BRACCO

ODYSSEY/REGENCY AND HBO

IN ASSOCIATION WITH CINEMA PLUS, L.P. PRESENTS A BECO PRODUCTION

ELLEN BARKIN BLAKE EDWARDS' "SWITCH" JIMMY SMITS

JOBETH WILLIAMS LORRAINE BRACCO ~~WILL~~ TRISH CAROSELLI ~~WILL~~ HENRY MANCINI

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ARNON MILCHAN PATRICK WACHSBERGER PRODUCED BY TONY ADAMS WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY BLAKE EDWARDS



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## FEATURES

**PRIDE (35 mm)** Lohani Image Productions. Executive producer: Robert Palmer. Producer: Antonio Filippi. Script: Quinn O'Connor. Director: Stephen Elliott. Scriptwriter: Stephen Elliott. Cast: Pia Gattino, Ayesha. Accidently kills a girl, unwittingly a catalyst of overdeveloping her remaining features and a career in feature film photography. **WOMEN'S (35 mm)** Film South Pictures. An Australian-UK co-production. Executive producer: Kim Williams. Producers: David Elliot, Eric Palmer. Director: David Elliot. Scriptwriter: David Hickey. Salvation comes from an unlikely source for a girl from the bush. Inaugural best by a movie in the entry.

## DOCUMENTARIES

**LUC LONGLEY: AFRICA'S FIRST NBA PLAYER (30 mins)** Great Productions. Producers: Peter Gross, Russell Kennedy. [An Action Director: David Wood. Scriptwriter: Peter Gross. Recently selected to the U.S. National Basketball Association. Luc Longley is about to become Australia's highest paid team sportsman. This is the story of basketball in Australia and Longley's giant strides into the big time.

## AUSTRALIAN DIRECTORS WITH OFFSHORE PRODUCTIONS

**LIONEL LLOYD** [George Miller. Cast: Nicky Katt, Susan Sarandon. [No other details available]. **ALBY CARR** [Steven Clifford. Roadshow Productions. Producer: Lloyd Phillips. Executive producer: Russell Phillips. Screenwriters: Robert Dixon, Michael Thomas. Director of photography: Leslie Kavan. Production designer: Richard Robert. Cast: André MacDonell, Liam Neeson, Jack Thompson. Olympic Delays. **WITH HANGS** [Roger Davidson. Morgan Creek Productions. Producers: William Goldstone, Scott Rinder. Screenplay by: James G. Robinson. David Mackay. Gary Barber. Screenwriter: Denise Pyne. Director of photography: Peter Newman. Cast: William Davis. **MOKEY MOKEY** [FRODO BARATHOR] [George [Peter] Miller. Pictura Assets Productions. Producer: Don Kern. Screenwriters: Don Kern, Thomas Karkorian. Director of photography: Gabe Sarrafian. Cast: Shelley Long, Catha Barman, Larry Miller, Gabe Goodman. **JENNIE COOPER** [John Asher. **MR. BEEHIVE** [Fred Schepisi. Universal Productions. Producers: Doug Claybourne, Robert Menzies. Executive producers: Jeff Oliver, John Lee. Screenwriters: Peter G. Sarrafian. Jeffrey Price. [Ed] [Ed] [Ed]. Director of photography: Ian Baker. Cast: Tim Robbins. **WILLIE LLOYD** [Bruce Swatford. **The Zanuck Co.** [Producers: Richard Zanuck, Lili Fini Zanuck. Screenwriter: Alvin Hilly. Based on the novel by Josephine Humphries. Director of photography: Peter-James Goad. Albert Finney, Jill Clayburgh, Piper Laurie, Betsy Arant, Kyle MacLachlan, Kathleen Erbe. **Street Images**.

## AUSTRALIA'S FILM HISTORY GOES UNDER THE HAMMER

### LEO WASSERSON REPORTS

A significant part of Australia's film history is about to come under the hammer. One of the jobs in the former Palmemaster Studios' inventory. Syd may also be included on the 3 October 1991.

During the early 1930s, Palmemaster Studios was one of Australia's leading film production studios. It was forced to close down due to the policies of the American-owned "Columbia" which controlled the major drama-theatrical Australian film and performed a variety of American-style films. Australia made film more related to local society than long-term theatrical films, with the result that Australian producers were often working on extremely tight budgets, not a lot of money and closed doors, one after another.

The end result was the destruction of the Australian film industry and the dominance of Hollywood for many decades. By the late 1960s, the Federal Government called in Royal Commission on the Film Industry in 1967. It was to be the Australian Film Industry did not survive until the "New Wave" film of the 1970s.

The late of the Palmemaster Studios also includes the influence of Hollywood on the Australian film industry. The latter part of Australian film in Hollywood.

Cornell Baker Australian Productions was formed in 1919 by Reg "Doc" Baker, the brother of J. J. (Robert) John and Dan Cornell and Southern Cross Picture Films. In April 1919, the company took over Palmemaster House, a colonial mansion which they have been built at early to 1920. They turned it into a studio, with 10 rooms, a scene of land, garden, outdoor tanks, waterfalls and fountains. It was used for film production. "Doc" Baker did some spectacular stunts at the site of nearby Drimble Road.

The Cornell Baker company made four films in rapid succession at Palmemaster Studios. The films were: *Kingsman: The Shadow of Lightning Ridge* and *The Jackaroo of Goolberrig* (respectively numbered 145, 171 and 177 in the *Pink and Cooper's Australian Film 1910-1919*). All three were essentially Westerns set in Australia. They gave full scope for the studio in Baker's mansion on Olympic road for set dressing and an Australian Rugby Union Test game, among his numerous sporting facilities (including a play area, including a pool with plenty of shots).

A daughter of Palmemaster's sister, when he leaves his film-making skills, was Charles Chavell, after whom the AFI's name in Pictura. For him, until recently named Chavell, was a student at Baker's physical school and the school. By the time the film was made, Chavell had progressed to become the assistant property man and a scripter, as well.

In August 1920, Baker left to try his luck in Hollywood, followed soon after by Chavell. Baker lived in Los Angeles for the rest of his life, where he achieved fame as a stuntman and coach.

Raymond Longford had already been doing some work at Palmemaster while Baker was there. WB's Baker's departure, Longford took over the studio in conjunction with the Cornell brothers and later also with Leslie Lyall under the name of

the Southern Cross Picture Film Company. In 1921, Longford made *Road to New Zealand* (No. 183) and *The Blue Mount and Mystery* (No. 189). *Blue Mount and Mystery* was the sequel to his own story line. *On the Beach* (No. 191) was based on *Blue Mount* (No. 183) and *On the Beach*.

After *The Blue Mount and Mystery* was released, the Cornell withdrew from film production. He returned to his own business, but ended up heading major entertainment companies in the film industry and his death in 1925. With the departure of the Cornell, Longford and Lyall transferred to other studios.

Commonwealth Pictures made only one film in 1921 at Palmemaster Studios on *Safe and Sound* (No. 195), which it went into production.

The last to try their luck at Palmemaster Studios were Jack Baker and B. R. Baker, who produced one film in 1921, *A Knight of Love* (No. 193). Baker left for Hollywood in 1925.

The marriage and of Palmemaster Studios a film studio. Baker turned into a school of film and in 1925, the film was made was subdivided into dozens of blocks of land and the creation of several new streets. So ended a magical era in Australian filmmaking.

Today Palmemaster House remains a grand and charming building, complete with a grand entrance, with a large stone column, and an entrance as well as a large stone column, with a large stone column, with a large stone column, with a large stone column.

## AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION FILM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME GUIDELINES

At its July meeting the Board of the Australian Film Commission approved new Guidelines for the Film Development programme effective for the 1991-92 financial year. The new Guidelines select a consolidation of policy and a new system of application and selection, including processes following the implementation of the AFC review this year.

Response to the Guidelines was sought and received from industry bodies and cultural agencies around the country. The AFC considers the feedback both encouraging and stimulating. After consideration by the AFC, some amendments were made to the Guidelines as issued on 3 July and copies of the amended Guidelines, effective until 30 June 1992, are available in request from the Melbourne and Sydney offices of the AFC.

The AFC believes that it is actually receiving the Film Development Guidelines, and actively seeking and welcoming feedback from the industry. It will ensure Film Development is both responsive to industry needs and that a more dynamic and fruitful relationship between the industry and the AFC can ensue.

## 1992 AFC FILM FUND

At the 1992 Fund from Finance announced August with a closing date of 1 October.

AFC Chief Executive John Morris said, "The 1992 Fund will raise production finance for four feature films (through a combination of private sector and AFC participation)." Budgets of around \$2 million were proposed, with a budget exceeding \$2 million being accepted. All financing and



INTERVIEW

BY

JAN EPSTEIN


# Jocelyn



# Moorhouse

## THE GIFT OF PROOF

THE HISTORY OF JAMES MOORHOUSE'S *Proof* IS ALREADY WELL-DOCUMENTED: selection as opening film for La Quinzaine des Réalisateurs (Directors' Fortnight) at Cannes in May 1991, where it received strong reviews and was a runner-up for the Camera D'Or for best first film; screenings at the Melbourne and Sydney Festivals in June to thunderous applause; and a theatrical release in Melbourne in August to spectacular reviews and solid box-office.

The history of James Moorhouse's *Proof* is already well-documented: selection as opening film for La Quinzaine des Réalisateurs (Directors' Fortnight) at Cannes in May 1991, where it received strong reviews and was a runner-up for the Camera D'Or for best first film; screenings at the Melbourne and Sydney Festivals in June to thunderous applause; and a theatrical release in Melbourne in August to spectacular reviews and solid box-office.

Since its Cannes premiere, *Proof* has been notching up impressive sales around the world. Producer Lynda House says "Every major territory except Japan and America was sold in Cannes. America we will have by the end of the year; there are a lot of people who are interested in it." This is a remarkable record for a film that cost \$1.1 million (from the Australian Film Commission and Film Victoria) and is the lowest-budgeted film at the 1991 AFI Awards.

Jan Epstein, who first saw *Proof* at Cannes, interviews Moorhouse to help find out what has made it the most-acclaimed Australian debut feature since *Sweetie*.

## CANNES

What effect has the Cannes reaction had for you as a first-time writer-director?

**FORTUNE:** It was a wonderful gift—in *Proof* to me and to Lynda. What it did was put a spotlight on the film.

I was very pleased that it was at the Directors' Fortnight, because of its history and how it is a little different from the rest of the Festival. And being given opening night was just great, because it meant the Directors' Fortnight people were saying that the film was special. But that also set up an enormous sense of expectation in people's minds, which is frightening for a filmmaker.

The really positive word of mouth *Proof* received after opening night was just precious because people kept talking about it. Even screenings were arranged for Ben Leslie (the film's sales agent) was inundated with people wanting to buy the film.

Cannes is a great place for people to start talking about your film, because they all go back to their different countries and talk and write about it. That international word of mouth really helps with sales.

[*Variety* reviewer] David Stratton said that he felt the film would go beyond the art-house market.

A few people have said that and I actually believe it will, too, because it's not really an arty kind of film. People seem to really enjoy it and have a good laugh, and a lot come out quite moved. They're not alienated by the film, it's not a struggle to get through.

I never set out to make an art film. I wrote it because I was interested in the characters and the story. And as a director, it gave me a lot of challenges, and let me explore things in different and interesting cinematic ways. But I wasn't out there trying to make an artistic point of art; I was actually interested in telling a story.

*Proof* combines well the so-called European or French tradition with Australian naturalism, which is rather opposing with its Australian vernacular and naturalistic acting style.

There might be some truth in that. The way I would interpret it is to say that *Proof*'s about real people in a very unusual and extraordinary way. People can relate to these ordinary characters and yet be taken on a very mysterious kind of ride.

There are a lot of things that people can laugh at. They don't have to be aware of any kind of irony or genre. They can just enjoy it as ordinary people. That's maybe what made it into a more mainstream sort of film.

Obviously Roadshow (the film's mainstream distributor in Australia) feels that it has that sort of potential.

Well, I always hoped it would. I think it has a lot to offer a bigger audience. We'll see, won't we?

Is there a sense of continuity with Cannes? Does the fact that you have done well this year make them especially interested in your next work?

**OK, yes.** [Film director] Adam Eggleston told me that the Directors' Fortnight is like a family and they don't forget you. Once you've been part of it, you are always a kind of relative. And once they commit to your film, they love it and love you. That's what I felt. I was really drawn into the family, which was really nice. It was unexpected because I wasn't prepared for that warm and cozy atmosphere.





"I think that it's important for a film to be made about men and women from a woman's point of view. [*Proof*] is my point of view. I am a woman and, therefore, anything I write and direct about a man is going to be seen through female eyes."



Did you see many other films at Cannes?

No, because I was so busy. But I liked *Thelma & Louise*. It really blew me away.

I was kept busy every single day by journalists from all over the world and by *Harvard*'s Fortnight people. They didn't tell me that they had all those unscheduled screenings that I would have to attend. And, on top of the marketing screenings, they also had a diplomatic thing of, "Oh well, we'll be nice to this feature, we'll be nice to this one, we'll have this screening." I was constantly going and giving talks and being thanked.

After Cannes, did you go to the opening of the *Australian* season at the Centre Pompidou?

No. I was planning to and I was very excited about it. I dropped it into the Pompidou Centre before we went to Cannes and loved it. I couldn't believe that my film was going to be on here. And then I got news that my child was sick with very bad cramps and was having breathing difficulties. Nightmares came flooding to my head. I started imagining that he was dying like in *Awake* and the boat—my little boat, going up and up and up. So we made produce apologies and happened on the plane. But I'm going back in Paris in September, so I'll go and apologize personally.

## THE FILM

Does *Proof* have any autobiographical material in it?

Not historically, not factually, but all the characters have me in them. My feelings and fears are very strongly there.

Which character represents those qualities the most?

Obviously Martin [Hugo Weaving] and Colin [Genevieve Peck]. They contain an awful lot of me, and a lot of the relationships I've had with people—the psychological games I've had with men I've known. I have taken things from friendships that have stayed in my head and put them into Martin, his fear of women's strength and mystery, the things that he fears for, but is terrified of, his fear of sex. He is not sexually afraid of his desires, just afraid of how vulnerable they make him.

By actually opening up for a woman, he is now in a position to be hurt and betrayed. I'm very interested in that quality in people and particularly in men. A man is supposed to be so strong, so tough, and yet a lot of men are really small trembling behind that exterior. That concerned very female and caring, but I don't mean that way. I really am interested in the children in adults—and in myself.

Some of the child I still carry as part of me. I definitely should hang on to that to some of it I should say. "Come on, it's time you went away. This part of me has to grow up." I guess I'm interested in exploring those elements in film.

Andy, of course, is different, because he represents the kind of people who are really quite spaced and beautiful. They are very generous and loving, and they don't play games. They often get hurt, but they can run straight through the games of people who think they are more superior, who try to keep people like Andy at arm's length. But people like Andy often will break through. He

LEFT: "PROOF" HAS BEATEN ITS OWN ANTIHEALTHY FILM CREATIVE RECORD AND MARTIN CHANGS RELAYING, JACQUELYNNE BOGGS/BOGGS PRODUCTIONS

# Jocelyn Moorhouse



represents people I admire and love. I know a few people like Andy, and I have tried to capture them in him.

**Why are the male? Is it because you want to showcase male problems?**

To me, men are fascinating topics, though I wouldn't say that Gelsa isn't fascinating. She is my darkest fear — of what could have happened to me if I had remained unfilled in my life, if I had suffered from too many rejections, from being made to feel worthless the way a lot of women are.

A lot of people think Gelsa is very funny and they love her relationship with Maria, I do, too. There is a lot of fun, but it is hiding a really deep and black despair about her womanhood and about the fact that being a woman makes her powerless in this man's little world. So, she's fighting that. She's saying, "You tell me that I'm just a cleaning lady. You tell me I'm worthless, but I'm going to make you realize that you need me, not just as a housekeeper and not just physically, but sexually. Even though you're going to try to fight me off, I won't take no for an answer." She is desperate.

**What does she see in him?**

That he's a man, that he's handsome. He is in pain and she would like to cure and help. She wants the right to help him. This is a big fixation with a lot of women. They think they can cure bastards like him. They think they can save them. It's a very real fixation and I've had it myself at times. But you find that there is something you can do for people like that, they'll just hurt you.

**Why doesn't he want to break off from her? He is the one that says, "This is enough."**

Yes, he does. That is because she loves him too much to ever leave him. She is addicted to him. They're like drugs for one another, and they do get a sort of fulfillment, a kind of sexual and emotional unionism, from the games they play. But, of course, it's never anything healthy or positive. It's always, "Yes, you have my attention for the moment. Yes, you're making an impact on me momentarily." That's what she gets from him. By putting furniture in front of him and by causing a few bruises or upsetting him, at least it's some attention. It's not just being paid off and, "Go home now Gelsa. Thanks for doing the laundry." It's, "Oh, you bitch, I've just felt your breast. Gee, that was a bit amusing", or "That was a bit scary." But at least she is actually forcing him to say, "Yes, you are part of my life", because there is nothing more cruel than being told you have no significance in the life of someone whom you believe you adore. He knows that, and that's how he plays the game.

I think that she is more addicted than he is, and he has a realization that it's time to end the games. And that's what he does, though he still has a little bit of fun when he fires her. But he is actually finally respecting her as a woman, as a human being, when he says, "Okay, I acknowledge we've been playing games. I've been cruel. Let's end it." It has to be brutal as has to be, "That's it", and she realizes that.

When we talked about that scene in rehearsal, and during the shooting, we realized that that was the first time that they actually

LEFT: FRY TO ENTERTAIN; THE BOMB: MARTIN WINK; ANDY: JOURNAL; CROWD TO DECIDE: JOURNAL; BARRAGE FOR THE MARTIN WINK; FERRIS WITH TODAY; WHAT AND IT WAS: GELA. HON. GELA: MARTIN TO HIS FIRST COMBAT; FERRIS: ANDY: GELA WITH A FRIEND. ANDY: ANDY: FERRIS

"A man is supposed to be so strong, so tough, and yet a lot of men are really small boys hiding behind that exterior. [...] I really am interested in the children in adults — and in myself."



trusted each other like human beings. He even acknowledges that she has exceptional brains. They finally respect each other. And, for me, that's the saddest scene in the film.

That realization is simultaneous with his coming to grips with his past.

Yes. It's a sort of a crisis point. Martin has been heading for this all his life.

So has she.

So has she. That's true.

I wanted to give the impression that she was a woman who has been trodden on many times by many men. Finally, she has a chance. Here's a man who has a handicap and she can get in. She hasn't been able to get in anywhere else. But because Martin can't see her, she has suddenly all the power. She can radically watch him, the object of her love, which she couldn't do if he could see her. She can spy on him and take photographs and possess a bit of him. She can manipulate him.

This is a wonderful liberating power for her and she goes for it. I can imagine I would if I were like her and in that situation. It's because she has up until now had no power and suddenly she has a little.

Now, she drives a BMW.

A very old one.

But still it is a status symbol which one wouldn't imagine someone in her situation having.

Well, don't forget she's middle class. She's not extremely poor. I always saw her as being a woman who might of had a lot of dreams and aspirations, and maybe she came from quite a well-off family.

So, they are both middle class?

Yes, but it's a very disillusioned class, too.

I'm not one of those people who are into discussing class. I saw her as a person who was probably an only daughter, and whose parents gave her an education. But she never really fulfilled anybody's expectations, including her own, of what she was going to achieve in her life. She's been slowly getting worse and worse kind of jobs. Both her parents are dead now, and she's obviously inherited some money. But she's a little bit aimless.

I always imagined that car was either one she inherited or bought with some of the money that got when her parents died. It was a new BMW, but it does tend to define that she wants something better in life.



But she allows him to do that.

There's a lot of men in that, you know.

For all our feminism and self-assertion, we are trapped in the sense that we need someone to cut the tie.

That's right and sometimes it has to be him.

You don't allow history to intrude, although it's a really dense psychological drama. And in that psychological drama, it seems that Celia and the mother are sort of twins.

They are, yes.

The mother must have had a profound effect on Martin's character for him to feel the way he does.

I imagine she did, but I wasn't there. It isn't that she didn't love him, though she might have repelled by her fear of his disability.

How I imagined the situation was this: she's had a handicapped baby and her husband's left her because he couldn't handle it, which happens a lot. Back in the 1960s, children with disabilities were outside real to be filmed, shameful things and were hidden away, or just not brought out in public very much. It was incredibly cruel.

Children are so sensitive and Martin felt that rejection. Them, when she died, he was thrown in ultimate rejection because children are the centre of their own universe. The death of the mother becomes, "She left me." And, of course, he had no proof that she had died, the father had left, so maybe she had left him, not. It would have been very easy to do.

As he gets older, Martin knows it's unlikely that she had him, because he was undernourished by the loss of his mother, he keeps her alive by having her and by believing she is still alive. That is better than admitting she's dead and that he is alone. Therefore, every relationship he has is based, more or less, on levels of loss. That's why when Celia says, "I didn't think he was capable of not hating anything", Genevieve used to complain it was a double negative. "Can I just say that he is not capable of loving?", and I used to say, "No, no, no. You can't use the word 'love' here, until you talk about Andy." She'd say, "Oh, that seems a bit unfair," but I'd say "No, that's the way Martin feels. He either hates someone less than he hates that person – especially with women, because that's the only way he's known how to feel towards them. It's not really hate, though, just fear."

It is intriguing that you are interested in understanding the male point of view to illuminate the female predicament.

Oh, I think that it's important for a film to be made about men and women from a woman's point of view. It is my point of view. I am a woman and, therefore, anything I write and direct about a man is going to be seen through female eyes.

And yet the film, when one first looks at it, appears to be through male eyes, because the first impression of Celia is that she's a malignant character and that Andy is the goody.

ARND BRONKHORST WITH ARND BRONKHORST, "PROBABLY REFLECTS MARTIN MORE THAN CELIA"  
ARND AND ARND AT 10, BUT IN 1985 AT 18 IT WAS A GOOD COUP. "ARND BRONKHORST AND CELIA: THEIR CONVERSATION WAS ALWAYS OFF OF ME, AND A LOT OF THE REACTIONS WERE OFF WITH PEOPLE." ARND

But if she wants something better, one has to ask why she becomes the housekeeper to a blind man?

It is that kind of love's obsession.

But why does she want to love someone who looks her in the hand?

She didn't know where she started that he was going to be like that. All she knew was that he was a handsome blind man.

And he becomes a challenge?

I always figured that she would be like a traditional woman who has a Charles Brown's complex. I don't know if you ever read *Love Eyes*. I did and loved it.

And, of course, Rochester is blinded.

He is here. And Jane no plans but incredibly fascinating woman who had been trouble as an all her life. So she manages to win the love of this wonderfully charismatic bastard, whom she turns into a nice person. It is the perfect romance.

For the 19th century.

Yes, but we women still suffer from this. We are still trying to cure those bastards. And the smaller Martin is to Celia, the more she wants to say. She has harboured the dream of "I'm going to turn you into a caring human being." But, of course, that's a very tough call and she probably can't do it alone; in fact, she gets hurt.

I always used to Genevieve and Hugo that I didn't think Celia was like this when she started. I imagine she was quite vulnerable and had probably been quite plain all her life. I mean, I don't see Genevieve on plate – I think she's gorgeous – so I dressed her down. She has this wonderful understated beauty that I wanted audiences to think they have discovered. Luckily, a lot of people do think she's really beautiful and they almost indignantly say, "How dare you! What's she doing as a housekeeper?", as if housekeepers can't be beautiful. It's a good effect because I wanted them to think Martin is stupid for treating her like a monster, because she's not. He's treated her into one by his cruelty.

**"I'm not interested in making a thesis, or starting with a theory and then writing the story. I'm much more interested in being taken and haunted by a story, and then encompassing some of my passions."**

But he actually traps Martin more than she does. She comes up, but he does it. He's weak and culpable, because I don't think anybody's perfect and he's a typical male in that he can't trust her. She's offering herself and he goes for it, even if it means being hurt. I'm not saying all men do that, of course, but a lot of them do. A lot of them swallow their physical pride.

**Have you had any criticism from feminists for that point of view?**  
Not outright criticism, just questions.

**There is a sense of his having his roots very thoroughly in the background, so one doesn't really question it.**

Well, I hope so. I thought about the characters for years. The script story, very carefully worked out, is not a film. There are a lot of lines in there, like the line that we put Celia in a small flat and put trees sounds on the soundtrack. If you're on the train tracks, the visual plane is a bit cheaper, but you do become haunted by the sounds of trains. And while people may not consciously be aware of that, they are subconsciously aware that she's not rich. She spends all her money on photographs of Martin, because they would be expensive to get, enlarged and framed.

**How does Martin come his being? Apparently, in one draft of the script there was a hint that he had something to do with computers.**

Yes, but was forgotten.

Basically, you know his mother was rich and that he's living a little on what she left him — his trust, whatever.

In the original script, he also made money by listening to CDs and reviewing them. When I spoke to a lot of blind people, they said that's quite a common job.

**Would you think of putting that back in? Have other people asked that question?**

No. In fact, I only put it in a late stage where someone did ask, "Oh, what does he do for a living?" That question is such an art, I never really cared what he did and I thought, "Well, maybe nobody else will."

You could ask a lot of questions about all of them, and I don't mind people doing that because to me the characters are real for them. They are real for me, too. I often wonder if Celia has a mother, what was her background, what kind of education she had.

As for Andy, he's obviously estranged from his parents. It goes back to why I explore men. Clearly I am fascinated by blindness, but my next film is very much exploring the human condition from a woman's point of view. Absolutely.

**After getting back to Celia, I don't think I told her about it. I think I totally explored her as well.**

**That's true, but why not have made a film about Celia? Why not have taken her point of view?**

I was having a conversation with a friend in a coffee shop and she told me about this blind woman who took photographs. I guess that's what stuck in my head: a blind man. For all I know, if she had told me about a blind woman, the film might have been different.

**It is interesting that you resist using his blindness as a metaphor...**

I'm not interested in making a thesis, or starting with a theory and then writing the story. I'm much more interested in being taken and haunted by a story, and then encompassing some of my passions.

**So it had a more organic idea, dealing more on emotions.**

Yes, very much.

People often talk on psychological and semantic levels, but I'd have to be persuaded into thinking I have to make films like that. People often get surprised when they hear I'm making a thriller. They go, "Why?" And then I vaguely outline the plot and they go, "Oh, a doesn't sound at all like *Proof*." But I'm not just *Proof*; I have other things I want to do.

**Apparently it took you four years to go from script to finished film.**

Yes, and I'm very glad it did, because it let me have a long break between writing the script and directing it. I was able to think about and making the transition. Of course, giving birth and becoming a mother changed me personally and the way

I approached work in an enormous way. It provided me with more empathy and looked to further corners that I had never been before as a human being.

For one thing, I understood more the *Backdraft* about the mother and child. I'd written those scenes earlier and now I was a mother, with a son. It definitely helped me to direct Heather (Mitchell). I know what I was talking about this time, rather than just using feelings about the human condition, and levels of painful joy. It hard to explain, but it really stretched me psychologically. I was not planning that, but I also was not seeing on emotional level after the birth of my baby. I think that into my work, which was great. It really helped me, because *Proof* has an all kind of emotions.

**It is a very powerful scene where the mother wakes up and finds the little boy touching her face. She is broken not to do that. It is a really great scene.**



# Jocelyn Moorhouse

Yes, but she doesn't mean to be. I wanted to show that, sometimes, just a comment, a mistake, can have a really powerful effect on a vulnerable person.

The alien was. I'd been alone in this dark world, would search be enough? No, I think I would want physical contact. When the little boy is feeling his mother, he really just wants to look at her. He loves her and she doesn't really understand. She thinks she's his eye.

She is trying to teach him to survive, but that's the pain of being a mother. You want to protect your children, but at the same time you realize that you instead to hold them close and protect them is the worst thing you could do, because you should be preparing them for what is actually a brutal world.

**So this scene was obviously influenced by your new experience as a mother?**

Even though I wrote it before going birth, I wanted to try to capture this woman, and not just have her as a mean, one-dimensional character. Even though I knew I only had a few scenes in which to capture her, I wanted to say that she was full person, the other woman I just a caricature. I wanted to say that she was the mother in an again taking the child? I wanted to say that she was a woman with her own pain and problems. She is struggling with her own loneliness and, on top of that, she has a handicapped boy. She doesn't know how to feel about that. She's not a mean the way that movies often trying to say that mother with handicapped children are. Rather, she's dealing with it and with the fact that she's dying and will be leaving him in a few months. Even though at this point in the film you don't know it, I wanted to convey that emotional baggage. Even though she rejects him, she's not rejecting him on a deep and profound level. He gave her a gift and she's being brutal with him, saying, "You're not going to be able to do that."

**It was also revelatory about the way blind people use their fingers as eyes.**

It shows how much they really do miss out on. We can just glance around the room, casually be looking our context. If we want to reach out to somebody, we can do it with a single. It's just a quick reassurance: "Yes, I'm loved," or "I'm liked, I'm approved at." But people who are in the dark, what can they do?

It's funny, but when you talk to blind people, their fingers are constantly crawling. They are so beautiful and always liquid. I was fascinated by the hands of the children that worked with and spoke to who were blind.

**Did you do much research?**

I did over two months to make the film. I thought I could only benefit from spending time with children who were blind, so I went on out to the Braille School and met with a few children. They were really lovely. They really fascinated me.

Also, I was looking for someone to play the boy.

**But the actor you used wasn't blind?**

No, but I did think about the possibility of working with a blind child.

**How far does the story you heard originally parallel the finished film?**

It was nothing like what we have never talked a blind it since. I never even met the blind guy. He wasn't blind from birth, so that's one difference. Also, he was very well educated and married with children. He took photographs and had his children describe them to him. He could meet them, he was lucky.

I felt it would be much more interesting for me as a writer-director to invent a character who couldn't trust others, that gave me many more possibilities for stories. I started with a character; I

didn't know where the story was going to lead me.

**So what do you think happens to Martin? Does he go on to a new relationship?**

I think so, but I didn't want to give the film a warm happy ending because that would have been incredibly fake. At the same time, I did want to give a feeling, however small, that there's hope. Martin is actually going to start again. His whole way of relating towards people will change because he's learnt from Andy that faith and trust aren't about finding a method of proof. You can never have proof of those things. It's an intuitive thing, a leap of faith. You have to decide to view the world in a more positive way, so trust people. Then, things start to get better.

People are n't perfect, but that doesn't mean that everybody is going to betray you. Someone might be to you once or twice, but does that mean that they don't love you?

When it comes down to it, it's those important to always get the love, or to have somebody's love? Obviously, to me it's much more important to have their love. I don't like to be lied to, but...

## FUTURE PLANS

**With your new film, will you be using the thriller as a genre?**

Well it's not going to be your standard thriller. My model is something like *Don't Look Now* which is a thriller but also incredibly emotional.

My film is about a tight group of people, a family. It brings out all kinds of things like jealousy and rage but based between parents and children.

I also want to explore that fear of becoming a parent, of possession, and all its implications. When you create a new generation, the fear can overwhelm your emotions. It is terrifying when you suddenly realize you are now as that many of time. If something happens to the child you will be devastated. The world is blocked out, more than in any other relationship, and then that can be very frightening.

Then, I thought what a challenge it would be to try to do a thriller that deals with these emotions.

**How far along are you with it?**

I did alien from a few years ago. But that was before I began writing the Oedipal elements. I'm also making the central character a daughter, just so that my son doesn't get a terrible complex about me when he gets older. I don't want him thinking, "Is that how she felt about me?"

So, I'm basically diving through another draft. I don't know when it will be ready, but I don't want to have to wait too long. It will be very complex and, because it's an idea which is very dear to me, I don't want to rush it. I'd hate to turn around and think, "Well, I should have done another draft."

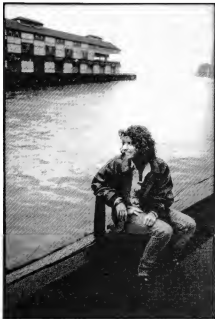
**Would you use Pines and Winsting again?**

I would love to see them all again, although I don't want to fall into the trap of writing a character for an actor. I really want to create really original characters and let really wonderful actors breathe life into them, which is what happened with Pines.

Obviously, the characters have power because the actors have power. But I don't think it would be a good idea to design a character for an actor. Anyway, an actor probably wouldn't like it, because they like to meet challenges, the same way writers and directors do.

**But a lot of directors have ensemble sort of studios.**

Oh yeah. I have a lot of friends and I would happily work with any of the actors in Pines/again. In fact, I would love to



**T** *Two part-time jobs*  
*Fifteen dollar lessons.*  
*And some rather monthly charges.*  
*All with one bank.*



**You can bank on Westpac.**

# Reel Pleasu

**SCOTT MURRAY**

This new column invites critics to list, with opinionated cause, what they consider to be the finest films of world cinema.

Cinema Papers will apply  
no rules, other than  
those of space.

As well, noted Australian filmmakers will be asked to supply the titles of their ten favourite films.

Starting off the column are  
Jacelyn Moorhouse,  
writer-director of *Proof*,  
and Scott Murray.

**NOTE:** To avoid this bill becoming almost exclusively the credit of Robert Drexler, the bill lowered the rate of only one 1/16 per dollar has been invoked. Mention is also made on each bill's introduction, and on what form

1

**Abstract**

For many, as much as the song is garbled with the force of its 1980s energy. No other film maker is so elevating all the sport so polished (point is technique is vigorous or intelligent) the others are politically, but by only sentiment or cynicism; tricky, but by getting every element down to minutiae. Each frame is a help of man on his and only through the juxtaposition of images does meaning accrue in a similar way, the viewer is kept constantly suspended with the film's end, when all the elements combine in a grandiose, poignant moment of accident to make motion.

All Bretonese films are about an individual's progress from confinement to freedom. That's why it is a film sponsored by a wrong-voiced Equity representative in the title "Lustre" which implies bitterness or antipathy. For while Bretonese have never been denouncing elements of society that deny and deny the existence of themselves and feature, his delirious

position is to celebrate that which is integral. How else can one view the selfless love that reverses the judgement, the discrimination that treats the condemned men and the purity that transports Jimmie & Red into Carl and Magistrate from pathetic earthlings to sainthood?

To realize one's expectations, this transformation program (Grossman) uses statistical elements to create and elaborate a spiritual world where every spiritual action is kind leaving a clear mental level turning a direct corner, without being thrown abruptly to the floor in an open location of a vault.

Choosing one Beethoven from all the others is necessarily arbitrary. But *Four Nights of a Dreamer* was far from being Beethoven's most delicious and popular film. This suggests the love affair with Pasts at night is at heart, like *Prokofiev* (1993), a journey to pure, accepting love where the body may not end up with its desires (he stayed up at the piano, ate at the dining table, in one of the cinema's most heart-rending images) but as the concluding writer of this and of the story ("White Nights") two Beethoven adapted "My God! a moment of life! Why not! That enough for a whole lifetime!"

[PS: *Shogun* at the Melbourne Film Festival also seems unavailable in Australia. No French *cinéma* accounts released. But was shown on television recently in England. Three stellar dramatic performances all there is to watch now of the screen!]



1. THE STATE OF TEXAS  
 COUNTY OF DAVALL  
 I, JOHN A. SMITH, County Clerk of said County, do hereby certify that  
JOHN A. SMITH is the duly qualified and acting County Clerk of said County.  
 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and the seal of said County  
 at the City of DAVALL, this 15 day of APRIL, 1915.  
JOHN A. SMITH, County Clerk.  
JOHN A. SMITH, County Clerk.



# res

2

**ORDER  
(THE WORLD)**

CARL THE DRIVER 1988

Driver, with Benjamín, is the grand purist filmmaker. He has been labeled a saint and a pessimist; yet here is a film in which a young girl's belief in a simple man's spirituality is enough to bring forth a miracle.

Order's stark universe is one of competing religious faiths, where neighbours are divided by varying conceptions of God. And rescued by all but the children is the "mad" Johannes (Friedrich Lorentz Rye), who sees himself as a living Christ.

Johannes returns from days in the wilderness after the death of his (Margarete Petersen) from childhood (though mostly off screen, it is perhaps the most hauntingly in absentia). He finds his distraught family around his open coffin, together with the village priestess (who is more interested in social engagements than preaching real faith) and neighbours. Now returned to normalcy, Johannes challenges those gathered to not seeking God to bring his sister back to life. This is blasphemy, he is told, but Johannes replies by calling them "evil believers." And he is right; for the church (at all its guises) promises faith only to a certain, safe degree. To go further would mean demands it believes will not be met. (The priestess explains this away by saying God does not perform miracles because they would contravene natural laws, which He also created.)



not true, which He also created.)

But Johannes will have nothing at all to do with a faith and strengthened by a child's faith in him, he declares: I am Jesus Christ. It is a scene of near terrifying power.

Given the potential glimmers of the religious discussions, it is in stunning tribute to Driver's mastery that he has made a film which for every frame is typologically involving. Like Eisenstein, he has no truck for false naturalism and he utilizes the performance as well as its role as scene. The cinematic camera movements must have been staggeringly inventive for the time, and today are no less rich with beauty.

Driver's videography (photography, Herminio Martins also put black and white with great subtlety—stretched grey and soft lighting. One need only look at the opening, where the white of some clouds slipping on a dark hillside stands out so brightly against a coldly brooding sky that the eye reverberates with dreams of powerful, even mystical, events to unfold. And it

does a transformation from death to life, there is that glow of faith against a desolating grey sky.

Driver made an even more perfect (for modest work here), classic (1984), but Order remains the perfect here for its sublime beauty and power.

(NB: Shown originally at the Festival and recently shown on DVD.)

3

**LITTH  
POSSIBLE POSSIBLE 1988**

Based on J. W. Salomonsen's remarkable novel, this is a superb feat of mental stress or "performance" as Rosenbaum would have it. This is a truly fantastic show, where the actor's performance is described by a hand psychiatrist as having

seen too much with itself as an instrument...

They have been destroyed, one might say by their own existence. Regarded in this way they are the torques of the universe, its inner process and its noxious fruits.

In this case, Litth (Jens Røssing) has, as with other Salomonsen, been shattered by becoming too close to a sibling. In *Darkness*, Light, Salomonsen's Sylvia stares into the sun while making love on the beach with her brother, thus rendering herself blind. For Litth, the trauma is to live in her own world, at people and language. But a world so amazingly bright that Vincent (Werner Bendt) wants to tell it to us well. The result, as when Vincent shows the jailbreak and loss of the outside, normal world to invade him, are disastrous. For example, when Vincent finds Litth with a lover, Yvonne (Jana Marckmann), he screams with male rage, "You dirty bitch." To which Litth calmly replies, "If you should discover that your god loved different, as much as he loved you, would you hate him for it? Would my love for all of you and you despise me?"

Rosenbaum invents every element of his magical universe with poetic intensity. It is the way the sound of a lake carries through the other water still set, or the way Litth's reflections on milk-brushed water shimmer with beauty and





Demy's recent death has inevitably helped to our attention once again on this most initially-still and brilliant filmmaker. This is particularly so for those fortunate to having seen Agnès Varda's precious tribute, *Jacques de Marseille* (1986), where many moments from Demy's life are evocatively re-created (yes, his father ran a petrol station in a town where sailors swept through the streets). Scenes that will always haunt those whose Demy is taught his first lessons in the baroque-tinged shopping excursions from *Lola* (1981) and *Les Parapluies de Chicago*, and how he glimpsed the rich potential of cinema when watching *Bresson's Les Dames de Bois de Boulogne* (1945) at 14."

Demy grasped that (potential) and created his own contemporarily magical world: it is an emotional class as much as a decorative or architectural one, but it is modern Los Angeles or the fairy tale world of *Perso d'Aïe* (1970): refers to a princess who's Louis XV clothes and a king on fly in a helicopter. And in every great heart there aches a love story.

*Les Parapluies* is the most tender of all, replacing the costly intellectual approach of much French cinema with an audacious lyricism. This singing-only film gloriously coated by Michel Legrand, is photographed (by Jean Ribes) against stylized backdrops of pastel colours, where characters glide as much as walk, and where the lesser moments are excluded to concentrate on what Demy senses keeps people alive.

In some ways, Demy has borrowed the pure relationship from Breton's *Photocoque* and remodelled it for Guy (Piero Castellaneta) and Madeleine (Ellen Farmer). But how the most must not lose himself from the (ironic) of a cerebral companion, but from the blinks of a love desire gone every. Many directors would have been tempted to leave it Guy's painting *Caroline* (Genevieve Danneval) and their child

at the end (Miaud, who Audin did film springs to mind), but Demy, ever the romantic, has a parallel love story, one of less glamour but greater spirituality. Inauguratingly overuse, like Breton's Michel (Martin Le Gall), Guy can rightly claim, "What a strange path I have had to take to reach you."

*Les Parapluies* by name and Demy's early masterpiece, and it is perhaps impossible to rate it too highly. Like and *Les Destinées de Michel* (1987). Even his last film *Tout Pleure sur la Terre* (1988) is a dazzlingly lyrical love and joyful celebration of life.

(NB: still preserved and available locally on an earlier boxed video with sub-titles.)

## 6

**THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI**  
 CHENGPEI WU 1948

Again we touch the problem of selecting just one film is a *Città del Sole* (1941). The *Atto* elegant *Amber* (1942) perhaps *Welles* finest in its original version, *The Lady from Shanghai* (1955), *Mr. Arkadin* (1955), *Touché et Fuyé* (1958) *Mr. Arkadin* (1958) or *Chimera* at *Metropolis* (1960)? That is eight masterpieces from a director biographer and whose love cinema was a talent who was inconvertible decline after *Kane*. Nothing could be more criminally *Italian*.

Here *The Lady from Shanghai* gets the nod for its cinematic mastery, which is once more dazzling than *Kane*. *Catalyst* few if any film makers of today have come anywhere near the stylistic mastery (and Mr. Arkadin pushes the syllable even further) in a few men conversation on the pad's, for example, *Welles* shoots in reverse. But instead of the standard (*Armen*) cut) approach of cutting back and forth between the same two (or three) shots (with class up *Welles* for variety). *Welles* reverses the two-shot composition on almost every reverse, is shot of the basic two (or four) shots, there is a *Welles* twist. And yet each one is arguably the most dazzling two shot in cinema!

Equally outstanding are *Welles*'s witty meditations on the cinema and the nature of

cinematic performance (from lawyer to clown), the film's relentlessly inventive playfulness and the way the director incorporates frames of his other work without ever allowing himself to appear serious. The dramatic range is also stunningly broad, from blood-thick scenes where sharks leap to a lonely street where a love-struck man is going to "forget her" to "Maybe I'm the thing."

There is a view widely held that the film makes no sense (and even if true, why is this necessarily a fault?). But no, "every I do do and I do not" as John Huston once said of a *Welles* performance. "This is brave and remarkable of its kind!" (NB: still occasionally screened theatrically.)

## 7

**JUCKER**  
 GEORGES FRANKU 1934

Franku is the most underrated of the great French directors, yet he made several of that country's finest films, including *Le Sang des Dieux* (1948) about *Le Tête contre les Murs* (1950). *Les Deux Femmes* (1960) how *Cherbourg* must have taken him into the future, creating the night drive of *Le Gendarme* (1978), *Thomas Desprez* (1982) followed by first all the Melina adaptations and *Thomas l'Imposteur* (1988). Even the flawed *Le Peuple de l'Abbaye* (1970) has moments of such delicacy as to numb the senses.

Of all great directors, Franku is (with Breton) the true poet. His sensuality is delicate and precise, more on paper, and the rarest beauty of his compositions more so other repetition possible. And of his masterworks, *Jucker* is arguably the most sublime.

Inspired by the director's love of the *Fourteen* artists (Fontaine, 1910-14, and *Jucker* 1917-18) the new *Jucker* is a touching homage to an earlier, more innocent cinema (and also to the narrative fictions of a Georges Leblanc). With extremely few words, neo-naturalist imagery and photography by Marcel Proust that delicately accentuates the powers of white and black, Franku weaves a





delays pass through glacially violent storms, ing. Response is triggered subtly" meaning. To dialogue but connections between images (metaphorical area of what in a scene should be highlighted) and what discussed, and of using a collection between scored music (by Maurice Jarre) and camera movement to further a notion about the world.



Seen that the greatest Lustwerk Musician who has been (1894) in *Die Kunst des Lustwerks* (The Legend 1906), *Hugos Stoffe und Ornamente* (1908) and *Die Kunst des Lustwerks* (1914), along with several other real-life films of standing this may seem an unusual choice like that as the film does not Wisconsin's first, a program number on a lone old man's coming to earth with a real family. This is many ways reflects the home of Wisconsin's first, a program number on a lone old man's coming to earth with a real family. This is many ways reflects the home of Wisconsin's first, a program number on a lone old man's coming to earth with a real family.

and Foucault (Stephen) – an usual – old world  
microscopic (Professor) nouveau riche (Gru  
man) – with no class (Kenny)

**9** QUE LA BÊTE MEURE  
(THE BEAST MUST DIE, KILLERS)  
de Michel Mitré, 1968

Cher's history of the greatest winning art has come from *Les Biches* (1965) to *Juste avant la nuit* (1971) with only *La Riposte* (1969) breaking the pattern. *La Riposte* actually predates a technique style that was picked up again with *Le Décalé* Prodigious (1972) and which makes a decisive turn with *Juste avant la nuit*.



has only intermittently emerged.]

Chatelet's choice of two films is extraordinary: the delicate sensual and sensually garbled of *Les Désirés* (the coolly elegant sexualisation of marital infidelity in *La Femme invisible* (1966) is the same sophisticated Prohibitionist flake in *Chatelet Désirés* (the sheer perfection of *Le Bouquet* (1876) with its shockingly violent ending and Jodel's rest at Nell (1927), a cryptically sensitive look at the bourgeoisie is need to confess guilt, which closes with the bleak "Being on the right."

One is later aware as is noted here for the delectable employment of aspects of the detective genre (there's a further assurance to the looking role in bringing to justice the female who takes her life away to exercise some of guilt and bonding. Most powerful is the resolution of individual responsibilities: the approved father having perished, the female is seen to find peace and then setting out to seek to give up her own life and release the boy.

The thematic collaboration of Chatelet, director of photography Jean Rabier and editor Jacques Gifford has resulted in a craft level of such sophisticated and well that one can only delight in it. Ideas important: meaning seems expressly from that which separates cinema from literature as when Chatelet directly leads Charles and Philippe not with dialogue or action but as acting scenes movements (a Chatelet effect). One could analyse the scope of the film and come up (perhaps) to individual culpability, but the filmmaking itself makes the relationship perfectly clear.

(NB: Released theatrically and shown on BBC.)

10

#### COLLABORATOR KATMAN (THE RED AND THE WHITE) WRITTEN JACQUES 1957

Jacques is perhaps the greatest of most individualistic artists, having created a unique filmmaking language: his infinitely accurate important moments of first European history with an ambivalence as striking as his own striking camera perspectives.

Once more to Jacques's films touch similar themes, and still similar cinematic patterns, including one is somewhat arbitrary: *My Japan* (My Way Home, 1964) has a casual gentleness

even a warmth, absent from most others. *Strophylaxys* (The Answer (1968)) is both stylistic in conveying the horrors men believe in others for political or class gain (it not just from tragedy). *David's Wife* (1970) and *Ory* (1985) is chilling in its simple evocation of the past (but less to murder).

But it is *The Red and the White*, with a graceful politician and the stunning black and white (by Tamara Bortol) that makes it the visually richest. *David's Wife* (1970) Jacques again creates an utterly unique world where individuals are defenceless, unsure for even a second whether they will live for even a second more. Yet in the utter hopelessness they find the strength and will to survive.

Again mounted cavalry ride in dramatically from the sides, attacking, killing off of sight and re-appearing with frightening suddenness. Again the camera moves on tracks that lead and ends back, leaving one anxious where one has been (it is going on one of a moral centre).

Jacques's portrayal of war is unique for its inaccessibility: ordinary. The terrifying order way officers pick out enemy soldiers for execution and are perfectly willing to see most American soldiers protest to really but go to die – or for sentimental leaders, the old ones. They like to believe there is a God over leaving soldiers struggling the reality of war. Jacques knew better and his evocation of a morally desolate background is all the more haunting for it.

Jacques well understands de Brode's maxim about having to represent people in order to oppress them: That is why they are constantly stopped at their clothes and then dignity made to perform pointless actions and have denied from their very desire to live. In an early scene of *The Red and the White*, captured Red soldiers are given a choice to escape a divided monetary. But when most are seen caught in a net and lose (they mostly stop themselves to be ready to shoot and lined up to be shot. Or there is the even more poetic image of a silent horse galloping backwards and backwards through a mine, only to a cavalry man's idea post.

And in this man made carnage, Jacques leaves no sides in *My Japan* (Apocalypse 1977), for example, the opposing sides are not even identified "In the Red and the White, when a Czechoslovak member of a White resistance is seen and girl, the White officers really cannot but let later embrace Red soldiers (most women without the slightest protest. One wonders indeed why the Soviets helped fund this film for) here is nothing in it to please a communist ideology.

(NB: Originally screened at the Melbourne Film Festival. Also shown in 1985, but it suffers dramatically from the inaccessibility of the screen and inappropriate cropping.)

11

#### LE SANDOUC JEAN PIERRE MELVILLE 1967

Yet another performed episode. *Le Sando* is Melville's finest and most subtle. With reverence an obsessive attention to detail and a perfectly judged pace on screen, Melville has made the film about this B-film icon the solitary killer. (There is no deeper loneliness than the camera's except the night in the jungle perhaps.)

*Le Sando* is absolutely delectable in its own self-identity. Henri Casati's subtle lighting (the blue-grey colour scheme, the benches with white and yellow and spectators (the latter whose faces are and words convey nothing of his soul – there are only his eyes, all those empty of others as sensitive).

Some have called Melville Brechtian (to which he lived in later) "It is Brechtian who has always been a killer?" (1) and one can easily see why in *Le Sando*. Similar systems apply: each image is implied as meaning, as the film can achieve only from the juxtaposition of images: the actors don't act but simply exist without attempting to imply significance other than through gesture, sound and light, convey only what the meaning requires and all else must be accepted (or paid to think).

The juxtaposition of images is well illustrated by the way Melville signals his camera's decision to come indoors. When Jeff (Jean Delon) first visits the nightclub to commit a murder, he lingers to see engine running, hear the end, shut outside with his body that speaks







# Blake

INTERVIEW BY RAFFAELE CAPUTO

Edwards certainly represents the generation of old-school auteurs, yet is still working in today's Hollywood with relative independence and integrity. His latest film, *Save It for Last*, starring Ellen Barkin and Jeremy Sisto, is the story of a man who becomes a woman, but not by his own volition. However it may be received, publicly and critically, there's enough evidence to show his career is not about to end. But even if it were, as though Edwards could be analogous to a blazing comet on the verge of burning out, there it is: go to quote from *J O B*, "Shit ah my foot, and oh my friends, it gives a lovely light."

LESLIE HALLIWELL ONCE WROTE OF BLAKE EDWARDS. "A MAN OF MANY TALENTS. ALL OF THEM MINOR." THIS IS PERHAPS THE STANDARD VIEW OF EDWARDS AMONG MANY CRITICS, PARTICULARLY ANGLO-AMERICAN. HE HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS SOMEONE WHO SHOWED A GREAT DEAL OF PROMISE EARLY IN HIS CAREER BUT MID-WAY THROUGH HAD SOMEHOW RUN OUT OF CREATIVE ENERGY. BUT CONSIDERING HIS CAREER GOES AS FAR BACK AS 1947, WELL WITHIN THE STUDIO ERA OF HOLLYWOOD, AND HAS DEALT WITH AN INDUSTRY THAT AT BEST CAN BE DESCRIBED AS VOLATILE, EDWARDS HAS PROVED TO BE A MOST DURABLE FILMMAKER. THIS IS MADE EVERMORE SHARPER GIVEN THE REAR-CATASTROPHIC RESULT STUDIOS INTERVENTION ON *DAWGLING LILY* AND *FIVE WILD HENNES* HAD UPON HIS CAREER IN THE EARLY 1970S.

BLACKBAND DIRECTOR BLAKE EDWARDS  
DISCUSSING THE FILMING OF *DAWGLING LILY*

*Role reversals and confusion over sexual identity are not uncommon features of your films. Do you think you have exhausted the possibilities with *Save It*?*

I probably have in terms of originality, of doing a whole film about it. These kinds of things might crop up again, but only incidentally, and not as the major portion of a film. In my early ones they came up as well, so maybe they're evolutionary. But I am not really a creator of my own films. People tell me these sorts of things are there, and I say, "Oh, that's interesting." I suppose they do crop up to some degree, if I can rely on the critics. There has been a couple of books written, but I can't remember the names of the authors off-hand.

*To use the title of the song from *Gettysburg*— "Whispering in the Dark"— your characters emerge from the darkness, literally and metaphorically, since they are in the dark about their sexual identities. So what is Steve Brooks (Perry King) in the dark about or, for that matter, Amanda (Ellen Barkin)?*

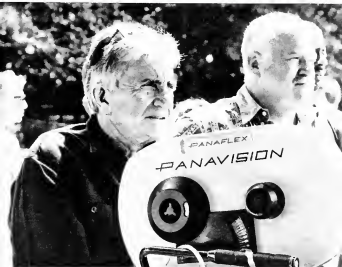
That's a very interesting question. I don't know that they are in the dark before the transition is made. He doesn't have any problems usually and knows pretty much who he is. But when he becomes her, she is certainly in the dark about a lot of feminine things. Hey, she has to learn.

Because it is convoluted, I guess you could say that he is very much in the dark throughout the whole film, in one degree or another, as to what women are about. It takes becoming a woman to find that out. That's the way I would describe it.

*One really isn't sure where to draw the line, but a crucial moment in *Save It* is when Amanda is about to make love to Steve Brooks (Lorraine Bracco), but doesn't. It is pointed out that she might be homophobic, but actually it's Steve who is.*



# Edwards



Yes, I think *Beetle* is very much homophobic before the change happens. He is an insouciant womanizer and an unpleasant as I could make him, almost of turning him into a serial killer. He's a man who suddenly becomes a woman, and has to struggle with that situation. He is homophobic to the degree that, even though he is in a woman's body and is faced with the possibility of having an affair with Sheila, which at this is interesting to him because he regards it as a kind of masculine prerogative, he's saying, "What the hell, I have a woman's body. I'm still a man in my head, so I'll have no problem. I'll just lay her and that will be that." But when he goes right down to it, the homophobia that he suffers from is so great that he can't manage it.

The curious thing about *Switch* is the sudden combination of high-energy "Tert" (like in *First Blood*) and putting a darker mood (that's *Left 1*). In your later films, dark elements creep in at unexpected points.

What you're saying is absolutely true. It has that probing element, but it's neither the high content nor high energy type, it's a little of both. I can't talk too much about it, but I like to feel that people think not whether they're good or bad, but that they evolve.

Again, whenever I do has some evolution to it and it's moving ahead. I don't know whether "ahead" is correct, but it doesn't stay static, anyway. There is a dark side to this film, no doubt about it.

# Blake Edwards



LEFT: EDWARDS WITH LYNN FAYE AND JAMES DOUGAN; RIGHT: EDWARDS WITH LYNN FAYE AND JAMES DOUGAN; BOTTOM: EDWARDS WITH LYNN FAYE AND JAMES DOUGAN

belonged to the fact that, although your films have a round figure, you are not so much concerned with establishing a sense of individuality as with the relationships of a group of people? The individual is important, but not as a focus in that sort, rather as someone who sets off these relations, or structures, to see what is the social consequence.

As you're making these observations, I'm trying to adjust to them and ask myself, "How true is that?" I know you have a point, definitely, because there is a very strong social point-of-view in my films and maybe to the exclusion of the characters somewhat. I have been trying to think of cabaret films, and something like *Yams/Venus*, which certainly talks a lot about role playing and things to do with social sexual roles, is a very strong character-driven piece. Since then, however, the character-driven aspect maybe has deteriorated. I don't know.

It's hard to respond because, while I recognize what you are saying, I don't recognize it strongly that I can really add myself to it without a lot of thought. It's so fucking hard trying to. I mean, I enjoy an interview like this because it provides me a little.

Well, looking back to some pivotal films in your career, *Exposure* at Turner and *Days of Wine and Roses* represent a radical departure from the type of films you were making previously.

It's interesting because I always believed for quite a while that one didn't necessarily have to be typical as a director. I probably guessed that upon one of the fact that I did get for those films you've mentioned, and certainly for *Wise and Fool*, some high degree of pressure as "serious" filmmaker. That's just to use a word. Not that I believe seriously can I be serious because it is very serious at times. Strangely enough, and I don't know what that is, whether more or the industry's, I seemed to be pushed into the mould of

being a comedy director. And it's a very, very tough job at times for a filmmaker to try something else on.

I have just finished a script which is a very dark piece. I was quite excited about it, namely so I gave it to my agent and he didn't care for it, he sort of suggested what I should do next or can do next. In other words, if he were to go out and tell me in the marketplace, he wouldn't have a chance of selling me for one of those films. I felt myself getting really pissed off. I always believe, as Billy Wilder said "That's as good as the best thing you've ever done." And I think some of the best things I've ever done have been of some whole film, their matters of very serious stuff. I hope so, anyway.

So, even the fact that what my agent said might be true. It makes me really miserable, if not angry, because right now in my career I'm infinitely more important in Europe than I am in the States. I can undoubtedly go to any number of European countries and make films until I can't get out of my wheelchair.

Why do you think that might be?

I don't know. You naturally tend to say, "Well, it's because Europeans are less smart or more discerning than us." You find yourself playing that little game, which is not good. The only thing I have been able to come up with is that, as some Europeans are more interested in filmmaking. They are more interested in the process of making a film, and in the people in the audience. When I am interviewed by the European press, as opposed to the American, or even when I talk to people in Europe who may not have anything to do with the industry, but are film-goers, they really seem to know so much more about it. They don't just go and sit there. I'm sure some do, but there'll be a small lot who seem to be interested in film and the people who make them. They can be just as discerning about something they don't like as what entertains them.

In the States, there is a kind of spoonful-of-sugar mentality. People go to be entertained. How the film got there, and what is behind it, is really of no consequence to them.

**"In the States, there is a kind of spoonfull-of-sugar mentality. People go to be entertained. How the film got there, and what is behind it, is really of no consequence to them."**



I really can't figure it out, unless somehow I've become famous by osmosis. I've spent so much time living in Europe and I'm married to an English lady (Julie Andrews), so maybe I am unconsciously more European. It's possible.

Your next personal film was probably done, more than anything else because of the dialogue. Take the exchanges between Peter Gans (Craig T. Nelson) and Jacqui (Edi Gathegi) in the opening sequence, for example: the dialogue is sublime.

I don't remember the sequence that well. What I can say is that I came out of radio where all you had was dialogue. I showed up on Sam Spade and the Dashiell Hammett series, which I truly love. I don't know how, but somehow I gleaned a taste of that for myself.

Although these days we are able to tell very good stories and make some wonderful films without much dialogue, we're forgetting that there are theatrics involved in what we do. I enjoy the theatrics. But with such an emphasis on realism — and there's nothing wrong with that — somehow the theatricality is lost.

I'm delighted that you feel that way about *Guns*. It wasn't a film I had wanted to do. It was a kind of low-budget movie my company was supposed to do. I had written the script, and then I had to step in and replace the director. It turned out to be great fun.

Of all your other films, *During the Day* is probably the most intricately devised in terms of the way the appearances of the characters keep overlapping in this a mode or the real person?

That's very interesting. *During the Day* is one of those films that drives me crazy, because it came to represent a major turning point in my personal life and my career working for a major studio. Unfortunately, I didn't have that out, and my perceptions were warped by a new regime that moved in. It's an old story by now and people around me are kind of tired of hearing it. I just made certain things with that film which I think would have made it a much, much better movie.

So, for me anyway, there is a part of it that is a wonderfully defigured beast. It has such "interesting" moments where the things you were talking about. But, on top of that, it's hard for me to even describe. If it had been done today, it would have won, or certainly been recognized for, a number of Academy Awards like cinematography. Look at the original print of that film: show me somebody from that era that even came close to that kind of cinematography. We worked so hard to get such wonderful things from a great cast, the sound recording and particularly the art direction and costumes. There is no doubt to me that film deserved half a dozen Academy Awards. I mean me too. If they had allowed me to do certain things that I wanted to do, I am absolutely positive it would have been a commercial success. But they just destroyed it.

Yet there still seems to be enough left there to make me sad. So, it seems they really didn't destroy it completely. But I wish they had gutted it totally.

*S.O.B.* is a more charming and slick film. No one or nothing gets away unscathed, except the dog.

That was a result of *During the Day* and another film I felt was the best I had ever done and which I had to let the studio completely destroy. It was called *Mild Red*, a film I loved dearly. If you have to see that film, please get a hold of the long version. It's closer to the version I wanted. And if people do see it, I'd love to hear from people, just to hear what they think about it. I truly mean that.

The slapstick tradition is very strong in your films. Possibly because of that, a good deal of critics, as you said earlier, tend to slot you into a light weight category. But a good deal of your comedy is highly sophisticated. For example, when Bing Marchand (James Garner) in *Hitler's Women* discovers that Victor (Julie Andrews) is actually a woman, even though he is secure in his own heterosexual, he is actually being made a clown. It's a very sophisticated, subtle kind of humor that makes us laugh at ourselves, at our fears.

# Blake Edwards



ABOVE LEFT: JAMES ARNOLD AND HIS SON IN BLAKE EDWARDS' *CRIMINAL MINDS*. ABOVE RIGHT: THE SUBJECT OF HIS OWN FILMS (HERE: BLAKE EDWARDS) *THE PARTY*

I don't think that was my intention. I don't set out to say, "Okay, I'm going to make my audience laugh at things." What I set out to do is capture my own demons, to make myself laugh at things which, to one degree or another, represent other people. That's the way I approach it, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't.

You just don't use a gag and throw it away, you really milk it. *The Party*, for instance, even though it has been described as episodic, is really one continuous gag from the moment through F. Baker (Peter Sellers) comes through the door with mud on his shoe.

I'd love to talk about that. I learned that technique through a very famous director named Leo McCarey. I was a writer then working for him and he taught me a lot. We'd sit and he would talk about how filmmakers had lost the art of the visual joke.

One time he was describing to me a scene in one of his early two-reelers where he was saying man sees a girl on a streetcar. In those days in Los Angeles, the streetcars had floodlights. So, she's upon the car and he's standing in the road, talking to her. The streetcar begins to move and he begins to walk. The streetcar gets faster and he's walking faster and faster. Eventually, he begins to run alongside the streetcar and it is going so fast that the steps fly him through 180 degrees and he lands on the street.

That would be the joke today. But not then, however. Now he has the position of getting out of the way of traffic. And when he landed, he had flew off and all of his things fell out of his pocket. So he has to not only dodge the traffic, he also has to retrieve these various things. The best way to do that, he figures, was put everything on his hat. When he's done that, dodging traffic all the time, he gets back and stands on the kerb. A lady then comes by and drops a quarter on his hat. That's the end of the joke.

I've always remembered that story and, whenever I do a joke, I always investigate to see if there is a tupper, and, if there is, a tupper in the tupper. And that was what we did with *The Party*. It is very tupperous and I love it.

1. The books say William Lohr and Peter Lotzoff's Blake Edwards, Ohio University Press, Athens-London, 1988, and their updated and revised version *Returning to the Screen: Blake Edwards Vol. 2*, Ohio University Press, Athens-London, 1993.

2. The long version is available on video in the U.S., but not in Australia. Edwards, however, has graciously offered to send over a copy.

## BLAKE EDWARDS: FILMOGRAPHY

**AS DIRECTOR:** 1955 *My Laughing Lady* - also writer, *Bring Your Smile Along* - also writer, 1956 *Mr. Cory* - also writer, 1958 *The Puffy Puffy* - also writer, *The Perfect Furlough* - also writer, 1959 *Operation Pilgrimage*, 1960 *Night Time*, 1961 *Scandal at Tillinghast*, 1962 *Experiment in Terror* - also producer, 1963 *Deep of Wounded Knee*, 1963 *The Pink Panther* - also writer, 1964 *A Shot in the Dark* - also writer, producer, 1966 *The Great Race* - also writer, 1966 *What Did You Do in the War, Daddy?* - also writer, producer, 1967 *Green* - also writer, producer, 1968 *The Party* - also writer, producer, 1969 *Darling Lili* - also writer, producer, 1971 *Wild Women* - also writer, producer, 1972 *The Carey Treatment*, 1974 *The Tamarind Seed* - also writer, 1975 *The Return of the Pink Panther* - also writer, producer, 1976 *The Pink Panther Strikes Again* - also writer, producer, 1978 *Knights of the Pink Panther* - also writer, producer, 1978 *10½* - also writer, producer, 1980 *S.O.B.* - also writer, producer, 1981 *Hair/Victoria* - also writer, producer, 1982 *The Puss of the Pink Panther* - also writer, producer, 1982 *The Game of the Pink Panther* - also writer, producer, 1983 *The Stars Who Loved Women* - also writer, producer, 1984 *Moh and Maude*, 1985 *A Few More* - also writer, *That's Life* - also writer, 1986 *Blind Date*, 1987 *Runaway* - also writer, 1988 *Joan's Case* (tele-feature) - also writer, 1989 *Shin Dope* - also writer, 1989 *Poor Gains* (tele-feature) - also writer, 1991 *Smith* - also writer

**ALSO:** 1947 *Pinkie* - writer, producer, actor, 1948 *Scandal* - writer, producer, 1949 *Swamp Gaff* - writer, *Random*, *Amos My Brother* - writer, *All About* - writer, 1950 *Crimes*, *Down the Road* - writer, 1954 *Down a Cracked Road* - writer, 1955 *My Sister Ellen* - writer, 1957 *Operation Mad Ball* - writer, 1960 *The Notorious Landlady* - writer, 1963 *Soldier in the Rain* - writer, producer, 1967 *Wrecking Time* - producer

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# The Australian Film Finance

In the previous issue of *Cinema Papers*, Helen Barlow wrote an overview of the Australian Film Finance Corporation. One of those interviewed for the article, John Morris, the FFC's Chief Executive, has taken exception to various aspects and sent the following response. Barlow replies at the end, followed by a comment by the Editor. Where Morris quotes Barlow's text, it is reproduced in bold. To aid in comprehension, sometimes more of a quoted sentence has been printed than the short excerpt used by Morris to identify a section.



AUSTRALIAN FILM FINANCE CORPORATION CHIEF EXECUTIVE JOHN MORRIS

## MORRIS LETTER

Dear (Editor)

Further to my letter of 16 August I [...] offer the following comments:

Page 34 [...] many filmmakers are in the dark as to FFC procedures.

If so, it is not our fault. The FFC is at pains to explain its procedures. I have given many interviews on all aspects of the FFC's operations, including the Film Fund. Investors/Managers take telephone calls every day from prospective applicants wanting to discuss one aspect or another of their proposed production or our funding attitudes in general. We have published guidelines which are updated every year. I am sure that despite all of this some people are confused, but I think the common problem is that it implies secrecy on our part and blame.

If this comment has been made by a filmmaker, I would suggest that the filmmaker has had, by choice or by grace of filmmaking, no direct contact with the FFC.

The FFC is aiming for a self-sufficient industry [...]

I did not say that. I have always stated, in fact every document the FFC has ever authored, that the Australian film and television industry will always need financial subsidy. The FFC's stated aim is to reduce the amount of subsidy required for each individual production so that the same amount of subsidy will be able to support a larger production slate.

[John Morris says that, after the heavily-funded EMMA period,] the industry needs 10 years to become market-driven.

I did not say that. The FFC's funding decisions are market-driven and have always been. What I said was that I believed it would take 10 years for a market-driven industry to reach its commercial potential. This is something quite different.

The FFC finances documentaries and television drama, but most of its funding goes to feature films.

Stated in our previous guidelines was our target like 40-50 per cent of our funding to go to feature films, 40-50 per cent to television drama and 10 per cent to documentaries. We discussed these targets in our current guidelines (which refer to a balanced production slate). This year we are down on our television target because the difficulties commercial networks are experiencing have led to a reduction in drama and decrease story commissions

# ce Corporation

and pre-sales, that has led to a reduction in available television and documentary projects – but this is contrary to our objectives. The above statement is quite misleading (because different guidelines apply according to the ways projects are funded). Whatnot? I do not believe any professional producer would agree with this.

The BBC's investment programme operates entirely on the basis of commercial risk.

Not true: While commercial risk is a major factor it is not the only one. Others are:

1. Genre: We have different requirements for genre films (e.g., action/adventure, thrillers, etc.) from those productions which are less obviously market-driven;
2. Commercial and critical record of major participants;
3. Size of budget: A low-budget production will be treated differently from a high-budget one, and
4. Cultural remit: The government's policy of support for the industry is based on cultural factors and this is reflected in the BBC's contract with the Commissioner which governs the conditions of its annual appropriations.

Page 25. *He (Morris) fails, however, to explain how they chose the "best films" (, where the BBC only considers commercial potential.)* I can only assume that the interviewer has misunderstood what I said. The statement is misleading since it implies that I failed to answer a question put to me when none was.

[*Wie Green ... producer Ron Rodgers says, "The BBC gave a lot of support while the project was still afloat, but, when it fell apart, they weren't there when you needed them."*]

The BBC held open an financial commitment to *War Green* (thereby supporting any other producer from using the money) for 12 months in order to give the producers time to tie down the deal that he had promised. Eventually, when there was no further hope that the deal originally offered to us could be delivered and none other was put in its place, we had no option but to let our offer lapse. The money thus freed was immediately invested in another production which had managed to secure and deliver marketplace support.

*Wie Green, for example, was not permitted to apply to the Film Fund.*

*Wie Green* was submitted to the Film Fund but was withdrawn by the producers when we were sent a letter from Bill Bennett: the

director, informing us that he and the writer, Peter Carey, had not agreed to the film being included in the Fund and opposed the application. To imply that this was anything over which the BBC had control is misleading. To publish such a comment without either acknowledging as author as to the details or giving the BBC an opportunity to answer the criticism is to consider irresponsible.

[*The £20 million Film Fund offers five films a budget of around £3.5 million, with £5 million left over for BBC costs.*]

The \$5 million is not for BBC costs. It is the not-to-be-able items of the budget which include:

1. Legal costs;
2. Underwriting costs;
3. An allowance for market testing of the film at double-head range;
4. An allowance for enhancement required by the producer as a result of such screenings, etc., etc., and
5. Delivery and other marketing materials.

*All this is made quite clear in the Prospect*

[*... applications closed for the second Fund last October, yet a final decision was not made until March.*]

What does the word "yet" mean? I think it is reasonable to infer that there is some criticism about the length of time required to arrive at a final decision. Applications closed on 31 November and the final decision was taken and announced on 22 February. As is reported elsewhere, we had 178 applications. I personally worked over Christmas (and through my annual holiday), as did Moya Lennon, our external assessor and the Beyond executives. I think the implication that we somehow took longer than we should is unwarranted and unfair.

Last year 178 scripts were submitted to the Fund, and had to endure a number of successive panels. The number was first cut to 50 by four outside assessors (I who ask to remain anonymous). There was only one assessment panel for the final three items the article said in parts. The assessors provided comments, but were unacceptable for short listing the projects. The BBC shortlisted the scripts.

*It was a commercial consideration that all films appeal to the under-25 audience.*

The statement suggests that this was an essential selection criterion – it was not.

[*One anonymous filmmaker ... said that*] "We were reduced to being contestants in a wheel of fortune [...]"



Apart from my dislike of an anonymous criticism, I have a number of complaints about this quote. There was no wheel of fortune wheelery. Every script was read and scored, evaluated and debated, and to imply that the selection process was arbitrary is a nonsense and gives no credit to the short-listed projects. Further, to suggest that there was some pre-decision to choose films about boys' coming of age is true may be. Such anonymous criticism is ignorant and malicious and I consider it deplorable to publish it. As a matter of interest you may like to know that of the 128 scripts submitted, 145 were written by men, 8 were the result of male-female collaboration and 35 were written by women.

Page 38: "As it happens [...], none of the selected directors is particularly experienced!"

This appears to follow on from the quote by the anonymous filmmaker on the previous page. It is I believe something that I said in response to your interviewer's question "Why are all the people associated with this year's Film Fund well-known, experienced filmmakers?" I assume something has gone wrong in the typesetting.

[Moore was disappointed with the overall standard of the scripts,] but says there were too many to cope with.

I can only hope that this was not what your journalist wrote. The sentence consists of two separate and unrelated statements:

1. I was disappointed with the overall standard of the scripts, and
2. In response to your interviewer's question as to why FFC employed outside readers, I said there were too many scripts for our limited external resources to cope with adequately in a suitable time-frame so it was necessary to employ outside readers to help with grading of the scripts.

Running the two unrelated statements together means something quite different and as I consider more damaging to the FFC and me personally.

[...] the Film Fund aims for cultural integrity and only approves impaired artists if deemed necessary on ethnic grounds.

The FFC has approval rights over principal cast in the Film Fund but takes no position in regard to scripts. The producers own the film and seek the FFC's approval, which is always given if the casting is sympathetic and appropriate. It is the producer's responsibility to obtain Actors Equity's approval for imports. Ethnicity is one of Equity's, not the FFC's, criteria.

[A recent issue of the film trade magazine, *Screen* (June 7-11), revealed that] a problem with *The Delinquents'* distribution deal has resulted in the film's not being released in the U.S. This sentence. Nothing in the *Screen* article says or implies this.

[...] probably three [films from the second Trust Fund] will apply to Equity for international actors [to appear in leading roles.] I do not believe that more than two were ever recommended by the various producers. As it turns out, I believe only one will apply.

Page 37 [FFC Investment Manager Catherine Hughes says,] "The

most important thing is to make as much money as we can so that we have enough money to reinvest."

Catherine advised Helen Barker that only I had the authority to speak in relation to the Fund. For this reason she has no recollection of exactly what she said. She denies having made this comment, although agrees something to this effect may have been said in a much more detailed discussion about the revenue implications of making profitable movies.

[...] the FFC exists on the premise that the industry will eventually support itself [...]

As I have said, neither it does not. This is absolutely incorrect.

Page 39 Adams adds that Ellis' "fantasy" of becoming a director [is not such a good move].

I do not wish to comment on any of Philip Adams' statements as reported in the article. I do, however, put it to you that it is unhelpful for *Gemma Pages* to publish this statement when Bob Ellis is on the point of directing the biggest and most important feature of this campaign. He is nervous enough as would any director be. He should not have to read such comments as this in a magazine that is supposed to be supporting the industry.

Yours sincerely,

John Moore, Chief Executive

#### BARKER REPLIES

While researching an article on screenwriters earlier this year, the FFC contacted me to up to interviews I was conducting. As a film journalist, my interviewers expected me to have the answers to such questions as, "Whatever happened to *Twice Baked*?" and "Is *Tell Them We Are Lonely* as I hear?" Since subsequent interviews included John Morris, Philip Adams and David Caesar, who all have various associations with the FFC, I decided to compile an overview of the organisation, so much to assist my own curiosity as anyone else's.

*Gemma Pages* was interested in publishing the article, but requested further information on FFC-funded film. FFC Chief Executive John Morris informed me that I had to approach the individual producers of each film, even though the information I required was fairly basic (final budget, release dates, box-office takings, casting, etc.). Luckily, the 1991 FFC Prospectus came out shortly before the article deadline and helped me in this regard, but not before I had spent several days on the telephone chasing up producers and directors. I ended up with a much larger survey than I had bargained for.

I then telephoned Morris with additional questions, once with Catherine Hughes over the phone. She added her comments to the interview. (The FFC has a somewhat distancing telephone where you can be randomly spoken to by a number of people from across the room, I was.)

In writing the article, I tried to synthesize the sentiments expressed by filmmakers from both sides – the winners and losers – but never too much to the detriment of the FFC or the career of



**JOHN MORRIS:** There was no wheel of fortune similarity. Every script was read and re-read, evaluated and debated, and to imply that the selection process was arbitrary is a nonsense and gives no credit to the short-listed projects.

the quoted *Newsweek*. While much of the information in the article may seem common knowledge to professional filmmakers, I felt that the cinema enthusiasts and aspiring filmmakers who read *Screen Papers* needed to be informed of the current methods for landing Australian film, especially now that the FFC logo is appearing on film credits.

The overall response to my article has been that I presented a balanced view of the FFC procedures. While Morris constantly reminded me that too much meddling would be detrimental to the FFC and the future of the industry, I believe that publicly discussing film funding is surely more constructive than the conspiracy-developed under IORA. These are the things people are saying, whether Morris likes or not, the stories are only made bigger because they are not discussed. So many people are willing, who knows what to believe? I think a book could one day be written on industry talk generated from the production of *Pink Beach*, for instance.

In his letter, Morris appears to be overly defensive at my attempt to explain FFC funding procedures in reader-friendly terms. And I was always careful to steer away from personal criticism. (The comment regarding Bob Ellis, while stated by Phillip Adams, is shared by many filmmakers on the basis of Ellis' two previous efforts as director.)

If Morris felt misrepresented in my article, he has had his right to reply. While I apologise for the two lines on page 36 regarding "Morris was disappointed", which should have gone at the top of the page, I do however deny any intention to direct quotes. As for my comment re the FFC aiming for a self-sufficient industry, Morris' continued reference to films being commercially- and market-driven did not lead me to connect it with the requirements for a continued subsidy.

In our three interviews, Morris stressed the "market-driven" agenda for the FFC investment film and not once mentioned its consideration of genre or cultural merit that he alludes to in his letter. He does, however, defend *Green Golf's* Australianness, because of Peter Weir and its supposed "look". In other low-rated cases, readers would naturally assume that the "commercial and critical records" of the filmmakers applying for the fund would have been examined by the organisation providing the pre-sale or distribution agreement – the initial 40 per cent.

It is certainly interesting, as Morris states, that current Film Fund projects will probably not be using imported actors. This possibly adds to the all-Australian casts of *Good Weekend* and *Pink*, which have been released since my article was written. Let's hope that the next *Good Weekend* Australian film article will be about the New Wave of Australian Cinema.

#### THE EDITOR COMMENTS

Morris makes three specific criticisms which reflect on editorial propriety:

**ONE:** Morris criticises *Screen Papers* for publishing the statement

that "War Games [...] was not permitted to apply to the Film Fund". He writes that "without either interrogating its author as to the details or getting the FFC an opportunity to answer the criticisms I consider irresponsible".

Well, as author was interrogated, the basic information coming (as the text implied) from an interview with *War Games* producer Ron Rodger:

Rodger claims that *War Games* was never submitted to the Fund (which is at variance with what Morris says). This is because during a discussion with the FFC about making a submission it became clear that the FFC did not believe that the film's budget could be effectively reduced to meet the Fund's upper limit. As the FFC had approved previously a budget of \$9.5 million, it is not surprising that the FFC balked at thoughts of attempting to make the film for only \$3.5 million (a sum shared by Bill Bennett and Peter Carey). And regardless of the idea by the FFC at discussion stage meant that the FFC was actively discouraging Rodger's applying to the Fund.

Morris would no doubt argue that this active discouragement does not constitute "not being permitted to apply". Others might disagree. Certainly, without this fuller explanation, the statement as printed could be said to be confusing. If this is so, *Screen Papers* apologises to the FFC (as it does for any factual inaccuracies).

For the record, Rodger also claims that the FFC kept its offer open only eight to nine months, not the 15 Morris says.

**TWO:** Morris feels that "anonymous criticism is aggressive and malicious and I consider it irresponsible to publish it".

Well, while printing a quote from an anonymous source is obviously far less preferable to using an attributed quote, it is an accepted practice in all disciplines. Courts have even ruled in its favour.

Second, the key question is: Why are so few people in the industry willing to openly comment on the film funding bureaucracy? The answer is simple. Apart from low-budget films supported by the ARC and some bodies, almost all Australian features need FFC financial involvement. Many filmmakers feel that contacting the FFC may affect their chances of getting their money.

**THREE:** Morris objects to *Screen Papers* printing Phillip Adams' opinion that Ellis' wish to become a director "is not such a good idea".

First, Morris does not make mention that a few times earlier it was said that "Adams is thrilled about the Film Fund's selection of *The Normal Heart* film". Surely Adams' comment on Ellis must be seen in this context.

Second, *Screen Papers* does not believe in censoring people's views. What Adams said is far comment and the *Screen Papers* Editor had no right to suppress any action he may not have liked.

Third, Morris feels that printing an honest opinion about a director's talent is contrary to "supporting the industry". Surely an industry can only be strengthened by open, free discussion. As many other societies have shown, suppression of "critical" material leads nowhere noble.

# Callie Khouri

ANA MARIA BAHIANA

REPORTS

**I**n a town like LA, where everybody from your valet parker to your dentist seems to be writing a screenplay with dreams of wealth and glory on their minds, Callie Khouri is a strange, notable exception.

Not only didn't she write a script in the almost ten years she's been living here, but, when she finally decided to do it, it was for all the wrong reasons. "I really was kind of frustrated because I did feel like I was a creative person and was just looking for something", she says with the sweetest smile in the sunny living room of her Santa Monica bungalow.

"For years I had studied acting and had learned about production. I thought writing was the perfect way to implement both skills. So, I sat down to write, just to see if I could finish the thing."

# ***Thelma & Louise***

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# Callie Khouri



**"I wanted to put two women up there whom you hadn't seen before, who were going to be doing things that you couldn't really predict. Because, you know, I can't recall a lot of movies where I would go, 'Oh, I would want to be like that woman.'"**

**N**ot only did Kluwe think the "thing," but it found its way into the screen in a big way it became *Thelma & Louise*, one of this year's biggest hits in America, and the most talked-about movie of the summer. How?

Oh, I just gave it to a friend of mine to see if she would be interested in helping me produce it, and she said she gave it to Mimi Polk, who's a friend of mine, and she gave it to Ridley Scott and that was it. Of course, when people hear this story, they just love me.

The true beauty of *Thelma & Louise* isn't the fact that it's such a well-accomplished (and incredibly lucky) film effort from a newcomer who admits to have been trained by "watching a million movies, reading lots of books. I read a few scripts, too, to see kind of how they were laid out." The true beauty of it—and the reason why it sparked such a furious debate and ended up on the cover of *Time* magazine—is that *Thelma & Louise*, quite deliberately and in a film, exhibiting, thoughtful way, turns inside out every single film cliché about women. Says Kluwe:

This was quite intentional. I definitely wanted to put a new slant on it. I wanted to put two women up there whom you hadn't seen before, who were going to be doing things that you couldn't really predict. Because, you know, I can't recall a lot of movies where I would go, 'Oh, I would want to be like that woman.' Not that I'm saying people would want to be like Thelma and Louise—they're criminals and outlaws and I wrote that quite clearly in the script—but, in most movies, the women up there are so close to me. I would just find myself questioning their motives. Why is she doing that? Why is she putting up with that? You know what I mean? I just thought it would be fun to put women in the active characters, make them the driving force of the story.

And driving force they are. In Kluwe's script, Thelma (Geena Davis), a housewife trapped into a marriage that is indifferent at best and abusive at worst, and Louise (Susan Sarandon), a waitress with a shady past, some emotional scars that refuse to heal and a well-earned life-sized, hard-earned love that she what is intended to be a weekend of female bonding, fun and games. A couple of hours into it, though, Louise can't resist shooting a man who has

tried to rape Thelma, and the duo finds itself in the dangerous and exhilarating fringes of law, order and society, where the road is apparently open and where, sometimes, they must find and redefine themselves. It is a road movie with the clearest gender bending: there's still two outlaw rompagues behind the wheel cruising the vast western landscape, towing guns, cracking jokes, engaging in banter, casual sex—they only happen to be women. "I didn't start out by saying, 'Let's see, I think I'd like to write a road movie.' I started out thinking about women as criminals. That idea was interesting to me." Kluwe's own background is, in her own words, "a little bit Thelma, a little bit Louise." The daughter of "a doctor and a doctor's wife," a middle-class Kentucky, Kluwe grew up with thoughts of becoming an actress "or something".

Initially because someone told what was supposed to be the ideal woman wasn't working very well. Families were breaking up in an alarming rate. Women who had educated themselves past the lowest degree in college were now 40 and having to ask their ex-husbands for money. It wasn't a pretty situation.

Kluwe finished college—where she majored in drama—and suddenly found out she didn't want to be an actress any more. "I thought I would move to Nashville and maybe work in a bank and be an ordinary person." Big mistake: she found herself working in a department store under a manager who was "a really gay" and called her "Dolly".

Taking a cue from her mom, she auditioned for a job as an extra/apprentice in a local theatre—that closed a year-and-a-half later. Faced with more "ordinary jobs"—she took one as a waitress in a country-and-western bar—Kluwe opted for a radical move: she packed her things and headed west, to that flickering mythology of promises and dreams, Los Angeles.

Kluwe got a job as runner for a video production company, and worked her way up: director's assistant, production coordinator, production manager, producer. "It was a good job, good training. I learned a lot about the whole structure, and I enjoyed it very much."

There was a problem, though—a very big one: the hilariously great nature of 80% of the videos she had to produce.

It was a moral compromise I had to do about once a month. I found myself in a position of having to pay a woman to do stuff that I thought was detrimental to all women—having her motion from about a foot away, stuff like that. It made me angry because a woman's have to be that way.

**"This isn't the story of two women who become feminists; it's the story of two women who become outlaws. They aren't the martyred wife/girlfriend. They aren't the murder victim, the psycho killer, the prostitute; they are outlaws."**

FROM LEFT: TOP: THELMA (GEOFF DAVIS) AND LOUISE (JENNIFER SANDRICH) IN THE ROAD MOVIE "A WOMAN OF FEARFUL REPUTATION" (JAN AND JANET); BOTTOM: THELMA (GEOFF DAVIS) AND LOUISE (JENNIFER SANDRICH) IN THE MOVIE "A WOMAN OF FEARFUL REPUTATION" (JAN AND JANET); LEFT: JEFF (JANET POT); A WOMAN OF FEARFUL REPUTATION (JAN AND JANET); RIGHT: THELMA (GEOFF DAVIS) AND LOUISE (JENNIFER SANDRICH) IN THE MOVIE "A WOMAN OF FEARFUL REPUTATION" (JAN AND JANET)

# Callie Khouri



The combination of this "monthly compromise" and the need to do "something creative" led, finally, to the challenge of writing what would become *Thelma & Louise*. "To me the real challenge was actually finishing it," she says. "I thought, 'Well, I have absolutely nothing to lose by trying to do it.'"

The loud outcry over the film, that had the *American* critics nearly split in the middle—is this, at last, a truly feminist movie, or is it just male chauvinism in reverse? Worse yet, is it a male-bashing, violence-condemning runty little script?—naught Khouri by surprise, but certainly not off-guard.

So many people are going, "Oh, well, this is male bashing and the men are cartoonish." Well, no more so than women generally are in movies. As for the violence, there's violence in almost every movie, it's just that the violence is usually perpetrated against women rather than by them, and I think that's the thing that's really bothering people. That isn't the story of two women who become feminists, it's the story of two women who become outlaws. They aren't the martyred wife/girlfriend. They aren't the murder victim, the psycho killer, the prostitute: they are outlaws. I put them outside—outside everything, outside of everything that's recognizable in pop culture. I didn't want them to be like the characters in *The Godfather*: not honorable, cunning, respectable women who didn't get killed at because they were wearing high heels and they were glamorizing themselves whenever that was necessary but that was something more acceptable. I think that if Thelma and Louise were wearing black bandanas and fishnet stockings and high heels they probably would have gotten away with it a little more.

WHEN "FEMINISM IS USUALLY PERPETRATED AGAINST WOMEN RATHER THAN BY THEM, AND I THINK THAT'S THE POINT THAT I REALLY INTERESTED PEOPLE," LOUIS AND THELMA TAKE AROUND TOWNS A BOMB.

Khouri, who is married to a writer-producer and is "in no way a man-hater, not by a long shot", is currently working on a script (which she's scheduled to direct as well, as part of her freshly signed three-picture deal with 20th Century Fox) about "a couple of generations in a Southern family"—from the women's point of view, of course.

I think that the people that are saying that *Thelma & Louise* is male bashing are certainly making the case because this movie is just an insured genre. So, if this is male bashing, then everything else is female bashing, isn't it?

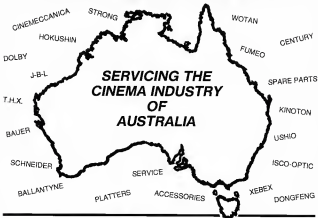
Is there—would there ever be—a way out of it? A "feministism" of Hollywood, so to speak? Khouri replies in a thoughtful way:

I think the whole thing boils down to money. If people start wanting to see films like *Thelma & Louise* as opposed to films like *Madon About*, then, believe me, that's what every studio will want to make. I can't find any rational reason for racism. It's the same thing with racism—there's no rational back up for racism. Unless I know if all women together are going to be able to take one giant step forward, but each woman can take a step. As soon as we stop feeling like a minority, I think things will start changing around a little bit. I don't feel like a minority, I feel like I'm in the majority. I don't know why. Maybe that's just hopelessly optimistic, but we are fifty-one percent of the population. ■

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A REPORT ON  
INDEPENDENT EXHIBITORS AND  
DISTRIBUTORS IN AUSTRALIA  
BY GREG KERR AND  
PAUL KALINA

# The Indepe

**I**n the arctic chill of a Melbourne Friday night, John Freeman sits glumly in the projection booth of The Carlton Moviehouse. It is the first time he has screened Shohei Imamura's *Kurosagi Ame* (Black Rain) and there are only four people in the 280 seats below. Across town at The Kino, patrons by the dozen begin queuing up to see the new Jocelyn Moorhouse film, *Passer*.

The contrast says a lot about the nature of independent cinema in Australia: two respected cinemas in the entertainment heartland of Melbourne; two films both highly acclaimed and topical; yet a ready, one seems doomed to die a quiet box-office death, while the other continues to bring in big audiences.

Consider, too, the way these films emerged from the distribution pipeline. While the much-vaunted *Passer* unraveled at the Directors'



# *ndents*

## *a risky business*

*Fortnight at this year's Cannes Film Festival, four distributors – three 'independents', one 'major' – put in their bids for what promises to be among the year's best home-grown box-office performers. As Vancorr would have it, Roadshow asked the indies, yet the film is screening not in Village Roadshow cinemas but, ironically, in the independent 'arthouse' venues belonging to the three under-bidders.*

*When distributors acknowledge that the market for independent films has grown dramatically over the past few years, they are referring invariably to the way major distributors and exhibitors have entered the field. It might have once been an underestimated market, feels Dandy Films' Lyn McCarthy (who also bidded for Poor), but "It is now realized that there is a really important audience for the quality upmarket film".*

# The Independents

## RISKS AND GAMBLERS

While most independent operators would say they have a finely honed understanding of their audiences, it remains a risky enterprise. Distributors and exhibitors cite their own experience the expensive tale that could never go wrong but did, and the little-known movie slated in to fill a programming hole that became a "sleeper" hit.

A gamble that proved expensive for Tony Anzotta, managing director of Palace Entertainment, was the \$325,000 marketing campaign on the British gangster film, *The Kings*, which flailed at the box office in the face of stronger competition. George Clooney as *The Aspern Tapes* in *St Nicholas* and that reviving an old print of *Lovers of a Fool* might have been risky, yet the film went on to gross an astounding \$45,000 in one week. Not so for Anthony Bonavia's *Cappuccino*, which did so poorly in Sydney that it closed after one week and was not released anywhere else. Frank Cox, head of Newsum Films, has purchased the new Peter Greenaway film, *Prosperity's Bells*, right unless—a risk he took knowing the success of Greenaway's *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife & Her Lover*. A calculated risk, yes, but, even Cox would admit, you never do know.

"To a degree, they are all gamblers," says Michael Walsh, managing director of Freeman Films with cinema interests in Melbourne (Ringling Bay) and Sydney (Academy Town and Walker Screen).

There appears to be a consensus, particularly among exhibitors, that no matter how much aboutthought, time and money is put into the promotion of a film, its destiny is in the control of higher elements.

"It's not much more a matter of marketing [film export back]," says The Carlton Movie house's John Freeman, who as chief projectionist for 15 years has seen his cinema through better times, when it was one of the very few genuinely alternative screening venues in Melbourne.

Others, however, have a somewhat more necessary approach toward the job of promoting films whose lack of stars, big-name directors, hype, cultural flag-poles and often unconventional story lines would leave them in the too-hard-to-sell category of distributor "Looks at *Sinema*, look at *Prosperity*," says McCarthy. "Without being cynical, if you have a good film, you can create that sort of phenomenon. You just have to be presenting the film to the right sort of audience."

## SPECIALIZED FILMS, SPECIALIZED AUDIENCES, SPECIALIZED HOUSES

Few can deny that the ground of independent cinema has markedly shifted from the halcyon days of intimated European arthouse films to a canny glaze in the screening programmes of independent cinemas across the country will confirm the fact: these days taken in all broader range and greater variety of films. The divide between independent and mainstream cinema has placated over the past two years with the realization that films can do well in both arenas (*Aladdin*, *The Field*, even, to a degree, *Prosperity*). The trend is truly reflected in the Ringling Bay where on "Classic French Film Box set" in August was being shown (and alongside mainstream-oriented product including *Defending Your Rights*) *Shogun*.

"The line has become a little blurred because the Hollywood or bigger producers are making our better-quality films or films that make people think as well as entertain," says Frank Cox.

Many distributors prefer the term "quality cinema" to "arthouse cinema", particularly to describe the market genre that includes films as different as *Waiting for Gossamer* and Eric Roberts' films.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the independent distributor and exhibition industry is the delicate relationship that exists between these (more or less) "specialist" films and a cultured audience. The alternate challenge, which to a large degree the independent distributors in Australia have succeeded in meeting, consists in obtaining products that satisfies a discerning audience or which, better, still, creates and educates a new audience.

"Knowing your audience is half the battle," says Frank Cox. "Having a good product is another one, and knowing who is going to come and see it is another two."

Nesbitt Miller, creative director of Sharrell Films and The Longford Cinema, says it is important for an independent operator to recognize the loyalty of an audience. She told she could "make a fortune" by screening a mainstream release like *Boyz n the City*, but adds, "We have an audience that turns in." At the Croxson Town, co-proprietor Alan Sampson wears down products with exploitative elements, even through a willing audience exists. On *Tremor 2*, *Judgment Day*, he says:

It is a two-hour glorification of violence. I would feel as though I were committing a conspiracy on if I played a film like that in an area where they have a big enough youth problem as it is.

Reaching an audience or, more specifically, reminding the facts of the latest attraction depends largely on the finances and resources of distributors. Promotional pushes vary from Palace Entertainment's \$325,000 marketing campaign for *The Kings* to a broadly played in the "What's on around town" segment of Radio 360's "Friday's Forecast". However, Len McCarthy speaks for every independent distributor and exhibitor when she says that her staff work very hard, often "on the smell of an oily rag", to promote films (mainstream editorial coverage, promotional, cinema deals and opening-night events have become a trademark of many distributors). It is not also to say that many of these distributors do an outstanding job with press ads and flyer presentations.

House styles are so well defined that often a distributor will pass a print over another exhibition outlet to fully exploit its potential. On occasions, though, a distributor might decide against screening a title because it is not in keeping with the character of its exhibition area. For instance, Frank Cox distributed 11 prints of *House of Wax* across Melbourne, loudly rebuffed for *The Kiss*. "The Kiss is more known for exclusive arrangements", he said. "We're not really known for screening science-fiction and horror films."

Those who go to independent venues regularly do so primarily because they seek a more specialized alternative to mainstream commercial cinema. And with the advent of multiplex theatres around Australia, the need for smaller, more intimate alternative venues, and the distinction between them, has perhaps never been so sharply defined.

A vital element in this formula is the degree to which the independent distributors rely not on output deals from major suppliers and producers, but on thoughtfully selected films to suit the requirements of the available screens. Adrian McCarthy

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Here, the *Deadly*, *Kinn* and *Melrose* remain consistently good business, but I'm sitting back and I'm cherry picking. I'll have that film and that film, but I won't have all three others.

## CHERRY PICKING

Subjected to what judgments on the part of operators inevitably affect their choices, although past choices are inherently made in tune with commercial realities such as the cost factor and availability of product. "We will look at any film and, if the deal is right, we like it and feel we can market it, we will go out with it," says Richard MacClure, whose company R.E.P. distributes films in cinema as *Self Is* To's Excellent Adventure, *Apartment Zero* and *Michael Angelo's 19 Up*. MacClure is content well summarises the indefinable blend of perceptions, feelings and commercial concerns that determine a distributor's decision to buy a film.

Even AFI Distributors, with its government "cultural bias", does not lose a moment in devising the commercial strategy for a film. "We will exploit every aspect we can with every film and some of them can be quite successful commercially and some of them will never be because they are not commercial kind of films," says Ian Dale, general manager of the AFI's distribution arm.

The AFI's Holbert exhibition house, The State, relies on film release titles in order to compete with its non-government subsidised rivals. Meanwhile, the AFI Cinema (formerly The Channel) in Paddington has a more selective programme incorporating special film events, release titles and Australian short films and documentaries. The AFI's executive director, Vicki Miller, says neither cinema has a charter written in stone, which allows both venues to respond to various market and product trends.

On a slightly different note, John Freeman admits that the films that perform best at The Carlton Melbourne are not necessarily the ones he likes.

Lyn McCarty says, "We have our own quirks and tastes and you go for those films you think you are going to be able to deliver."

Most operators say they don't run, to put it bluntly, "formulae", though it would seem foolish, for instance, to ignore the impact of a groundbreaking American independent drama by ignoring black director Spike Lee. "We'd run anything from *An Angel in My Table* and a *Jungle Fever* to *Longtime Companion* and *The Field*. As long as they are quality films, we don't mind which spectrum they come from," says Miller.

Indeed, a certain collection has emerged as the governing style of most independent distributors. McCarty says her business "usually" "There's some thing a bit different about each one, and I think that's what people look for in a *Deadly* film."

Although the independent film market is operated by nature, its players have varied methods and motives. Operators willingly conform to a necessary approach, in much as they say they love their product. One distributor-exhibitor, Tony Zencola, explains a successful software promo movie programming in the 1990s enabled him to cover losses on quality films. Others like George Farmer at The Astor allow a philanthropic zeal for reviving and screening old prints to override the profit motive.

Some distributors see an element of altruism also plays a part. "Some films," says McCarty, who has released such films as *Anton Eyegon's Speaking Parts and Ghosts ... of The Great Dead*, "have delivered the bucks, but that's not necessarily why we took them." She

adds, "It is also a good thing on the part of the distributor to have had someone's first film, it's not totally altruistic."

## DISTRIBUTING AUSTRALIAN

To a large degree, the independent distributors rely on imports, though some specialise in local product. Ronin Films' Andrew Pike observes that a lot of Australian films are destined primarily for the "quality end of the market". The ideal release pattern for an Australian film, he suggests, is a cross-over using both major and independent cinemas.

While in the public eye Australian film appears to be enjoying a renaissance at the local box office – *Life* last year's *Hardy Road, Death in Brunswick* is a ray of hope, a sign that audiences are finding their way back to Australian cinema", reported *The Age Good Weekend* on 24 August – some distributors are cautious and reserved about picking up local productions. For every distributor willing to risk the screen stories and the films that "hold their own against the foreign competition", there are others acknowledging that they've had their fingers burned, that Australian films are harder to sell, that the old poppy syndrome has a much flipside. Says Andrew Pike, "With a failed French film, you still get a few dedicated people picking it up in screening here and there, but as a successful Australian film is very unwanted."

Pike, whose Ronin Films has a particular interest in Australian films with local film currently working releases (*Steady Habits*, *Age*, *Background* *Philips On The River Farm*), says that local productions are very labour intensive, as opposed to international productions which tend to be capital intensive. McCarty confirms this view referring to the Australian film that arrives without a trailer or poster, and requires an entire marketing campaign.

On the other hand, the ability to shape a film's total marketing campaign from the ground up is one that distributors, such as Capricorn (whose most recent releases include *Rutherford Road* by *Lightning*) and Roadshow Distributors, clearly value. In a written submission to the House of Representatives "Missing Pictures Inquiry", Village Roadshow managing director Alan Finney said, "With Australian film our people have every opportunity to develop the material and get the creative satisfaction of working on the project from start to finish."

It was Finney who engineered the marketing campaign for *Death in Brunswick*, an independent film with a populist identification, once Roadshow-Greater Union purchased the theatrical rights. Producer Timothy White said he did not agree with all the elements Finney chose to highlight in the campaign, but he was not about to argue. For one, Finney believed in the film even when, according to White, it had its "detractor" within Roadshow. And besides, Roadshow was mounting the entire cost of the campaign.

White says:

I suspect that the confidence in this town [Melbourne] that the film could play once the actor has finished type usually to play in the specialist houses like a renaissance was the kind of thing that may be perceived as very offbeat and at least of marginal interest to the general public was being sold by a person who understood the film.

On the 21 screens running the film in Melbourne (where it grossed \$1.4 million at the box office) and Sydney, not more than two were independently operated.

# The Independents

If there are openings in the independent film market in Victoria, no one wants to go out there and find them. Most operators claim they have an interest in short films and documentaries but they present difficulties with programs structured around conventional one-hour season formats. Andrew Pyke, however, claims to have checked up "some remarkable figures" with theatrical distributors, most notably First Contact and Gaea Teatr.

There is also the occasional case where the cherry, rather than being picked, defecates and decides where it wants to land. The producers of *Ghost*—of *The Civil Dead* distributed the film themselves, negotiating seasons directly with the screening venues.

## MULTIPLE SOURCES

Smaller exhibitors without their own distribution apparatus often run into difficulties in trying to obtain programs. Some move-over houses specialising in second-release prints are forced to be somewhat opportunistic in their methods—in some cases constituting their calendars from 15 different distribution sources (The Actor). John Freeman at The Carlton Melbourne makes a rather grim confession: "This night, we're panicking."

In what seemed like an inspired attempt to overcome the product dilemma, The Carlton Melbourne negotiated directly with John Duggan to screen the rights to screen *Phobia*, a psychological drama starring Sean Scruby and Gena Dolevska. The Melbourne screened the film early this year, four months after SBS screened it as part of the station's 15 days anniversary. Says Freeman:

This really changed the film because it went from one to some of the screeners' eyes in Melbourne. Neil [John] [of The Actor] couldn't remove it because he'd seen it on SBS and that is a good warning for anyone who wants to put a film on television before they go theatrical.

It is suggested that with The Actor and The Vallée screening repertory titles, the market for revived cinema is growing in Melbourne. The days of sharing repertory houses, however, appear to have passed. Alex Menkova, co-director of The Mandolin Cinema in Sydney, describes how his cinema, after struggling with repertory programmes, forged a new identity and sense of life:

It took some working, repertory was a working. There was nowhere for us to go. We tried a few times, like House of the Living Dead and they worked. We said to it, it's got some life. So, we got The Hot Spot, The Diggers, Saving Grace, and The Gospel of John, which hangover through the roof.

Against this trend, however, The Carlton Melbourne is looking at screening more repertory product, among other alternatives to screen off competition from new Premier and Film Melbourne under controversial developments at the Lygon Court complex, some fifty metres away.

A frustration common to all independents is the film booking policy of the movie chains which prevent specialist theatres screening titles while they're still in their maximum five-release period. Some exhibitors report having to wait up to nine months before a print is made available, by which time the title has often been released on video. Another gripe among exhibitors is the refusal of commercial distributors to allow single-screen cinemas to run up to seven consecutive repertory major film has been released. Tony Secola wants a law to explain the logic of the movie policy which he says has prompted him to venture plans to expand the Balwyn Cinema into a complex.

Alan Simpson, director of the Trek in Toorak and co-proprietor of the Croydon Town, likens the policy to a wine goods supplier selling an outfit.

You can only refrigerate so quickly this week. You have to get rid of all the wine and the distributors and soon because we need a constant refrigeration, and it just happens to be the distributor and you can't get rid of it.

Product supply frustrations have prompted the Sydney-based United Independent Cinema Group to take legal action against Roadshow Distribution. At the time of publication, the Sydney matter was unresolved and The Actor was seeking legal advice with a view to a separate action against Roadshow.

Alan Finney of Village Roadshow sees the split-screeners more differently. He points out that all Roadshow requests an exhibitor is that it guarantee to run key seasons to the film in question. For example, on *The Silence of the Lambs*, an adult title, Roadshow would require the two evening seasons. On a children's film, such as *Rescue Down Under*, it would want the two day seasons. As Finney points out, it would be silly of a distributor to expect every single season since a film like *Rescue Down Under* would have only minimal appeal at night.

## THE PIRANHA FACTOR

When one wants to talk to Frank Cox a Newsworld Puma in Port Melbourne, one first has to get past his pet piranha. "People watch when they say to Frank Cox," he jokes, gesturing towards the kerbside-looking fish on his desk. Cox explains the staffed South American piranha was sent to him by an associate. In the fish, Cox looks nothing like a piranha, but whoever sent the fish presumably knows a thing or two about his ruthless business approach.

Among his peers Cox has a reputation for being a shrewd operator whose gambles, more often than not, pay off. It was Newsworld, for instance, who introduced the date show, off-beat Coen brothers to Australia with *Dead Simple* the company also reportedly paid about \$500,000 for *Cyprus Against the Odds*, the sort of figure which smart distributors say creates an inflated pricing watermark.

The grounds for co-operation between distributors are small, unless you're sharing product with an affiliate. "I think everybody is out there to get what they can for themselves," says Cox. "Sometimes that is really bad because it over-inflates a cinema product's prices."

Michael Walsh at Premier Film seems backpedalled but effective analogy is explained how product options in the independent film scene are limited: "The cake is only so big and there are a lot of people bidding for a slice of that cake."

McCarthy candidly admits that the reason who her competitors in whom she sets out to buy a film:

When we go to Coenen, without naming names, there's probably one or two [filmmakers] that have got a better chance than the others of getting the film. But there's plenty of room, and you get more and less work. It's as simple as that.

However, the jungle does have its own set of market-driven laws. There exists a strangely amiable, co-operative rapport between each of those alleged competitors. In their quarter (or, more accurately, off-the-record) comments, the distributors might well admit that each has a reasonably secure niche in the market.

Richard MacClure of R.F.P., a division of the television produc-



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campaign, can often stand up to a barrage of negative comments. Cox says, "Good crisis means big weeks and big weeks mean good word of mouth."

John Rosen at The Vulkans admits to concentrating the review system by looking for titles which have been preserved honourably at film festivals.

As Christmas we have *The Company of Strangers* from Hutchinson (The Film Office) and Neil Jillett has liked that film a lot (in the Melbourne Film Festival) and here and so on point. In one sense already, we know we have a film which is going to get very good reviews.

## STATE OF INDEPENDENTS

Independent operators have, on the whole, consolidated their position in the video boom of the early 1980s. Significantly, the major players have managed to 'vertically integrate' their operations, ensuring they are central cinema venues where the product they distribute can be optimally placed. Pyramid Films controls the film screens at The Brighton Bay in Melbourne, The Walker Street cinema in Sydney and (together with Roman Films) Sydney's Academy Theatre. Roman, in turn, controls The Electric Showbox in Canberra and is a partner in Natalie Miller's Longford Cinema in Melbourne. Lyn McCarthy and Graeme Tubberdhouse are co-directors of Dandy Distribution, The Dandy Cinema in Sydney, The Metro in Brisbane and The Saxe Cinema in Melbourne, whose distribution is Newcomer's Frank Cox. In more straightforward manner, several cinema, such as The Vulkans, The Mandolin and The Trak, have direct or semi-direct links to distribution centres.

All who speak to *Cinema Papers* reported a competitive yet profitable trading climate. There is a commonly held view that audiences are up from two years ago because "there was audience out there that doesn't want to go to the multiplexes" (Natalie Miller). Some simply believe independent films are getting better; others say the advent of video is largely to thank for making people more "film conscious" (George Foreman), some cite the range of international cinema provided by SBS and, to a lesser extent, the ABC, others merely laugh at the statistics that herald the current 'boom'. "Of course, they're up [attendances]. You know what point they came up from? We almost went broke, like a lot of other cinemas" (Kirkwood).

While most were reluctant to divulge figures, *Shattered Films* reported a conservative increase of eight per cent in revenue over the past 12 months. Alan Simpson says box office takings are up 20 to 30 per cent at The Trak and The Crofton Town. And despite a problem with lagging attendances recently, Foreman says The Carlton Moviehouse has been making a profit every week for the past three months.

It is difficult to derive a figure for the independents' share of the overall film market. One of the industry's unrepresented players, Michael Walsh of *Freemantle Films*, estimates independent exhibitors in Australian capital cities hold about 15 per cent market share.

In the week ending 7 August, three independent films—*Abel*, *Abel*, *The Company of Strangers* and *Queen of Hearts*—led on Australia's Top 100 movie list, which was headed by *Babe* and *Pearls of Power*. The independent film amassed \$125,000, \$40,000 and \$47,000 respectively. *Abel* took \$238,600 at the box office. However, Tony Abmound of the Motion Picture Distributors Association (which comprises the list) says the results cannot be overread

into an accurate market share because only a few independent operators supply figures.

## FRINGE BENEFITS

The video market's interest in independent and so-called niche fare has at best been tenuous: the major video distributors by and large locked into export deals with foreign suppliers. The mainstream distribution of foreign-language film-on video has only ever been limited.

Nonetheless, most independent distributors covet with the ancillary rights (i.e., television and video) for any film they distribute. As well as the financial gains, they require "protection" from the threat of a television broadcast during a film's theatrical run or an untimely release to video shops. AIT Distribution's non-theatrical rights for Donald Farrant's documentary *The Poshed Australian* targeted tertiary and second-level institutions, public libraries and art societies, as well as television and the home-video market.

A few independent distributors have moved onto the video distribution market, both through licensing their films to established video distributors. For example, *Shattered Films* recently signed a deal with Warner Home Video and through establishing their own distribution channels. *Pyramid*, and until recently *Roman*, have interests in the Home Cinema Group, while Newcomer recently ventured onto the market with a "sell-through" label. Other distributors negotiate with video distributors on a film-by-film basis. R.E.P. topped off some impressive sales with *Apartment Zoo* and *Bill of the Mockingbird Adventure*, which MacLennan claims sold more than 10,000 units.

*Dandy Films* will put its signature to a new label, *Dandy Video*, before the end of the year. Distributed by RCA-Columbia Pictures-MGM Video, the label will allow *Dandy Films* to put out all its titles, plus other product that it considers suitable. "We're assuming we will create a following for this label", says McCarthy.

Rosen has also managed to tap into the educational video market, which Pike claims accounts for about 40 percent of his own.

## WE SHOULD ALL BE MAKING MOVIES

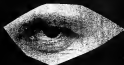
With the consolidation of the independents during the 1980s, it is not in the least premature to consider the next stage of vertical integration. Some distributors have already committed themselves to local film production: others envisage it as a possible area of future involvement. There is, however, universal recognition of the benefits for film distributors to become involved in a film's production at as early a stage as possible. In this way, sales and press lists required for the eventual promotional campaign can be best obtained, 'unit publicity' can be organized to create awareness for a film and matters such as product placement can be considered (Tony Malone of *Capricorn Films*).

Rosen will executive produce *Money Talks*, while R.E.P. will soon announce the imminent production of its first feature in Australia, *Queen of Hearts*. Lyn McCarthy confirmed that she is actively reading the many scripts that are being presented to her. "We're being getting a lot more hairy I think because of the FCC's requirement that producers go out and raise 40 percent of the finance." As Beyond International, too, notes a very close link between film production and distribution.





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## FRANK COX



Frank Cox, *Newvision Films* and (with Guyana Tobienbauer and Lynn McCreilly) *The Kane Gamans*, Melbourne

INTERVIEWED BY DAVID KRAM

**Are there any openings in Australian independent exhibition and distribution?**

I think there are for the right market and the right sort of location. What they are, I'd rather not discuss. I'd also rather not discuss what we are after.

**Has the market for serious independent films changed in recent years?**

I think it is very much a production-area market; if you have good product, your market will be there. It is regarded that times are pretty quiet, but it only needs a good film, like *Joan of Arcadia* or *The Company of Strangers*, to bring the people out.

I think the same players who were around two years ago are around now. The only thing that has happened in the past few years in the middle distributor has dropped out. In the old days, we had Seven Keys and Filmquest, distributors which sit between the independent or niche distributor and the majors. Those companies have disappeared.

It is quite hard to be a commercial film distributor if you don't have an organized chain of cinemas behind you. Also, the "B" movie, which in the old days you could do something with because bigger and bigger is made work. These days it's the big Hollywood blockbusters that make the grade or films that have some sort of market penetration. Perpetuating the market is the problem and maybe those companies were out of touch.

**What sort of films do you like to screen at The Blank?**

We're not just an artistic exhibitor. We try to pick films that have something to offer.

That's a very broad statement, but by "something to offer" we mean either intelligently made or from a distinctive director who is doing a lot with what he has. We are more interested in hard-hitting films than bland statements.

**With *Blood Simple*, you broke new ground in that you introduced the Cannes brothers to Australian audiences. How did you pick up that film?**

No other distributor had made a strong offer on the film. When we saw the film we thought that it would really sell well. We didn't kid ourselves, though we knew the theoretical would be a very hard sell, and it was. Theatrically, we didn't envisage our advertising money back. But it launched the film and it became a cult hit on video. At the end, we also sold it to television.

The only difficulty we encounter in buying a product is when there are other competing bids. If you're prepared to pay say, \$50,000 but there is another offer of \$55,000, then you're going to have to up-sell. Sometimes you pay more than what you should have.

**Is there a certain sort of film that you rely upon to do exceptionally well at the box office?**

No, we don't go with formulas. I think Newvision is good at picking new trends, films that people will want to go and see this year, but don't know about three years ago. You have to be constantly in tune with changing trends and buying product that will support these trends.

**Is there a reasonable level of co-operation among distributors?**

There's a certain degree. In the old days, when you went to a film market, it was, "You take that and I'll take that." That way, we didn't conflict with other. These days, though, are over.

**Is there a danger that the smaller players will be forced out by the higher level of pricing that a big buy creates?**

The truth of the matter is that nobody forces anybody to pay whatever. People pay the money they have calculated to get back. If they are doing it just to grab the product from the opposition, then they better have some kind of financial follow-up to carry them through. If you come in-

stant, then it's your bad luck. The idea is to buy films that you think you are going to return money on. None of the independents is subsidized, so you cannot say, "I will start up one day." You're going to have to catch up your in, you see. I don't think there are many small distributors out there which can afford there in four days.

**Where does a distributor and exhibitor each in Newvision get most of its income? Is it at the box office?**

Yes, most of it, but it varies from year to year. If you have a year where your bigger films have been foreign-language films, the market for video and television is extremely small. If you do \$500,000 in video, then you're doing better than most people. But it really does vary. I think into many dollars, especially if you are using a third-party distributor and you are only collecting a royalty of, say, 50 per cent. Foreign-language films on Australian television are non-existent on the commercial stations. The ABC buys only now and then, and SBS can't afford to pay the sizable amounts of money that may help a distributor recoup.

**What sort of involvement have you had in the production of films?**

Not much. What we have found recently is that there are areas where we can pre-buy. Although we haven't perhaps any Australian films yet, we certainly are getting offers. And we have pre-bought overseas films, that's because they have a known director and we trust what they are going to do.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

Below the jump the independent (jumping) board, a former dealer (board) of the jump board. Below the jump the board (jump) board (jump) a film board (jump) of jump board.

Jump out...black white...be hip...be cool...live and die with style

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## LYN McCARTHY



*Lyn McCarthy: Co-director (with Denise Tobbenhausen) of Dandy Films and The Dandy Cinema, Sydney; The Dandy Cinema, Brisbane; and (with Tobbenhausen and Frank Cost) The Kiss Cinema, Melbourne*

INTERVIEWED BY PAUL KAHNHA

**Dandy Films has now been in existence for seven years. What are some of the changes during this time?**

The most obvious thing to me is that the major distributors and exhibitors are getting involved as what I and others term "art-house product." This has made a more interesting life for everybody.

Ten years ago, the big film was the teen movies playing George Street. Cinema like The Dandy were seen to take risks that some producers aren't seen to be risky today. Peter Greenaway is no longer a risk, nor is a Spike Lee film.

**At the same time, do you think that the true art film has been displaced?**

It depends how you define it. I call a true art film something like *Wings of Desire* or *Daunt* or *Nova*, *Still Life*. I get a lot of pleasure from *Wings* and *Daunt* and Terrence Davies' work, where you are involved with the films as with the content.

How well it has had their films handled by the majors yet, but there are other sorts of films that are now being accepted into the major art channels and creating audiences. We'll see what happens with *Wings* when it comes film.

One of the reasons the majors are so interested in the art-house venues is their consistent selling. Whereas the majors' trade tends to be in profits and troughs, the art houses' tends to be more consistent and steady.

From an exhibitor's viewpoint, if I had to go and programme Hoyts George Street, or the Fox Centre, there's absolutely no way I could consistently make money with every film every week. I can never know if I could find enough films to put in there, let alone good ones.

**Is there much competition for the same product?**

Absolutely. But at the same time you know who your competition is. With *Frank*, *Nashie Miller*, *Newman* and *Dandy* were all bidding against Village Roadshow.

As for Cannes, it's a real lean-fight; there are so many films but there might be only three or four films you bother bidding for. In our case, the one film we absolutely wanted was *Europa*. Every year there's one and hopefully it's not the same one. Frank Cost or *Nashie Miller* thinks it's "the one".

It's a personal thing for us to really have to love a film to handle it. If *Europa*'s back out, you can always say, "Well, the instance was wrong." I want films that we really are committed to as an emotional, as well as logical, level.

**How would you describe the Dandy audience?**

I think it is looking for films that are innovative and often and which have emotional credibility as well as intelligence. It's not just an Academy Award sort of film about serious political issues. *Queen of Hearts*, for example, is a very soft film in many ways, but we felt it said something and would be popular.

**Are there instances where you have miscalculated, where that expectation has not been met?**

It's not so much an expectation. There are films we bought which we knew were risky and when we got them on the screen our apprehension came to fruition, as with *Speaking Parts*. We knew it was risky, but we felt *Anna Egoyan* was a young, up-and-coming director. I don't think we've ever had a film where we didn't know what we had.

As for *Europa* like *Senna*, I never argued about how popular it became. I thought it would get the younger audience but that the older audience would totally miss the point and not appreciate it. But it got an across-the-board audience and did very well.

**Do you have have a good relationship with the media in Sydney?**

Yes, and I don't think we do too badly in Melbourne. *Newman*, *Dandy* and *Newman* all have publicists who work very hard, that's the key to it. I can tell you as an exhibitor that it's very rare to have cinema with full-time good publicists. We've put a lot of emphasis on publicity, because we've had to do everything on the smell of money rag. We don't believe in huge publicity budgets, we believe in trying to stretch the dollar as far as we can, getting as much editorial space as possible, going for promotions, opening nights, cinema trade deals. That's very much a trademark of the Dandy and Kiss setups. The Dandy basically set that situation up and, when we started The Kiss with Frank, we duplicated the Dandy style of promotions.

**Have you seen the prospects for distributing Australian films?**

Definitely. We don't handle many. I think that when you do have very good Australian films,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50

## young soul rebels



### Isaac Julien

Nadine Marsh-Elliott

Videomaker Henry Mh Sengou  
Director Wendy Pearson  
Producer Barbara



The Playhouse

# The *Independents* Interviews

## LYN MCCARTHY

FROM PAGE 40

them require a fair bit of compensation to distribute it. For instance, I think *Splash* is a very good film, but that was already tied up with the financing situation and wasn't even up for grabs. People's very good film and we want to very hard to try to get it.

Some producers don't want to deal with the majors — they feel their films are better looked after by one of the major players — but they're usually films that need a lot more work. You have to do things like create the whole market campaign, there's no trailer, no poster, no flyer. It's an incredible amount of work, so again when you have bought a film from overseas and everything is sent to you. You may not like it, or you may change it, but at least you have the trailer, the poster, the flyer.

Working on Australian film is extremely hard. Most of the time the filmmakers are fantastic, but once and again you get someone who's responsible to work with, who thinks that the distributor is the big bad wolf. On most Australian films, we haven't made a lot of money.

**Andrew Fila** jokingly suggested that *Waiting* might have done better if it were a French film. Would you have a similar observation after exhibiting *Return Home*?

## FRANK COX

FROM PAGE 42

You have purchased the new *Peter Gunn* movie film without seeing it. Is that a big gamble?

*Peter's* leads in a gamble, but at least *Peter Gunn*'s work is known. Whether the subject matter will become popular or not is a different question.

We also have a relationship with *Gunn*'s production company. We started working with them on *The God*, *The Way We Live*, *Of the Love*. We kept them very close to the whole marketing and publicity of the film. So, when the next project came up, they spoke with us first and we grabbed it.

**What sort of money did you pay for the new *Gunn* movie film?**

It cost a lot of money to make, but it's a very good film. *Gunn* has been selling for \$100,000 and above for the last three or four productions.

**What has been the biggest gamble for you in recent years. Was it *Gunn* or *Return*?**

No. People look at the bottom line and think "not fantastic figures", but, if you look at how many weeks and how many seasons it was on, it did okay for what it is. I mean, *Return Home* is not a masterpiece, but it has a beautiful tone. We felt that the film had to be seen and that the director was someone who should be supported. But nobody thought they were going to make a million bucks out of it.

**Would your company be interested in more hands-on involvement in local productions?**

Sure. We read a lot of scripts.

We're restructuring the company's list at the moment and we are hoping that we can see our way down to being involved in production in the future. We go to the film festivals, and we know about buying and selling films and how the APC functions. We see them as a gateway for a company that really knows how to work those film festivals with good product.

At the moment, you have only beyond International, Kim Lewin Marketing and the APC, which is not as much a sales agent as a support system at overseas festivals. That's it. And beyond International and Kim Lewin are at opposite ends of the spectrum. Kim's work is basically from America, handling stuff from the European end. That tends to mean smaller films.

We have been going to the festivals for seven years. I don't need to go into it too much, but, when you see some of the stuff

*Gunn* was a different story because we bought it after we saw the finished production. *Gunn*, with an audience, but it was a gamble so that it was the most expensive foreign-language film we have bought. We made the film a success and now we are returning overseas.

**Which films are among your biggest successes?**

*John of Montreal* has proved to be one of \$2 million, which is pretty big for foreign-language films. *Gunn* was the most successful up to that, being just a notch down on \$2 million. *Outing* has proved to be, however, *John*, *Laz*, and *Monte*, which led you over \$2 million. With anything that sells more than half a million dollars, you have a fairly successful film on your hands.

**What have been some of your biggest disappointments?**

Like everybody else, we have our fair share of disappointments. A disappointment this year has been *Return* because it's a *Daily* movie. We thought we would have a wide audience, but you never know. Maybe people didn't come and see it because they didn't like the film, or maybe we put it out at a time when it

was happening, you think, "God, if the filmmakers only knew how his film is being promoted." It might be a mistake on the very last night of a festival, where nobody knows about it and most people have gone home.

I think there's room to market Australian films directly to sellers. You have to start selling the film from script stage and there's a skill to creating a film through marketing.

**Will your new video label be like Newline's recent move into self-through video?**

No. RCA/Pan/Columbia is releasing all *Daily* films product on a *Daily* video label. It will be self-through and rental.

**The video market in the past has skewed foreign films, claiming there's no future for sub-cultured films in this country.**

*My Life as a Dog*, which we released through RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video, was very popular.

We're going into this with our eyes wide open to RCA. We're not getting to break the bank. I will be like anything you take some self-will, some work, and the ones that work will really work.

We are buying a lot more English-language product, it's not because of the problem with foreign-language films, it's just that we're looking there is a lot of interesting, English-language, independent product out there at the moment.

was competing with all the Academy Award films — *James With Wilson*, *Glass*, *Amsterdam* — all of which had fairly adult elements.

**Are Australian independent films good enough for *The Kiss*?**

Sure. We screen quite a few Australian films at *The Kiss*. *Monty*, you, *The Kiss*, and only seven films it is offered.

**How did *Return Home* go there?**

That was a nice surprise. It was a film that we withdrew and was left shown at *The Kiss*, and it succeeded to a level above our expectations.

**Do you have any thoughts on the role of film critics?**

I think the film critics play a big role in the marketing of films in Australia. You can buy a lot of good film but, if the critics are not going to like them, it does disadvantage a producer. Film I might even kill a small film.

I think most of our critics are pretty good and most of them are film lovers, though there are the ones who are a bit of a snob, who they don't like something about a film, and their work is in and up to it too.



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## ANDREW PIKE



Andrew Pike: *Black Film, Bushman's Sonnet, Gashere*

INTERVIEWED BY PAUL KALIRA

**How do you see the current state of independent and distribution and exhibition?**

Independent distribution and exhibition is very busy. There is now a wider range of cinema, both independent and major, willing to take risks on so-called arthouse product. And there is a bigger market now there. Whereas 10 or 15 years ago we were dependent on the same old group of theatrical independent cinemas, nowadays, provided the cinema owners are good and there's good product, one can get quite a lot of playing time for a film in all the major cities, including Darwin, Alice Springs and other regional centres.

**Is Katin picking up different sorts of film today to 10 years ago?**

Very much so. Probably three quarters of our theatrical releases are Australian, but feature films and documentaries. We also pick up a steady stream of Asian cinema, which we have a personal interest in, particularly Japanese cinema and, until a year or so ago, Chinese cinema. However, we are still involved in some Hong Kong and Taiwanese movies.

Australian product isn't particularly easy to handle in that it's very labour intensive, in terms of preparing materials for the marketplace. Over the years I tend to be more straightforward, just straight interviews. But so like the challenges of local production and the involvement of producers and directors, and devising strategies for the individual films.

**How many films would Katin handle in a year?**

We tend to have fairly close involvement on sales, rather than going for volume, so I'd probably say about four to six per year.

**Is there any longer a clear division between the independents and mainstream market?**

No those barriers have broken down a lot. We do a lot of our business with the majors, Grainger Ureman especially, but also with Elopis.

The idea of the arthouse seems to be a bit old hat these days. It's more of a continuum and we tend to operate in the quality end of the market with our cinema and in distribution. With this continuum spectrum, our films can permeate into mainstream houses.

**Are there areas where the independents have a unique role to play?**

Certainly the theatrical release of documentaries is something that the majors wouldn't take on, and documentaries theatrically can clock appreciable figures: the obvious ones are *Jim Carraway's Good Year*, *An Unnatural History*, *Songs of the Independents* are willing to be a bit more adventurous with flexibility of programming, season limits and policy.

**With the number of independent players about, have the deals changed much? For instance, the price paid by Newsline for *Gashere* or *Bushman* was apparently a lot more than other local independents could afford.**

The greater buoyancy in the market is making the choice cinema often very competitive, so the prices are going up. The high price of *Gashere* was partly the high expectations of the French, but also the competition at the time. The French very successfully played one camp off against another, as I understand it. And I think that the same may apply now to Australian films, a lot of money was paid by Village Roadshow for *Prophet* and there is at least one other Australian producer who is holding off on his film rights until it can be shown in a range of theatres and some bidding gets going. A few months ago the producer would have been happy just to have a producer. But now he wants an advance as well.

**What have been your major successes and failures?**

The successes are fairly clear-cut. *An Angel at My Table* when we co-distributed with Naiche Miller, has been our most successful release. Other sales close to that have been *The Australian Good Year*. At the bottom end of the scale—and I don't want to suggest that it is a bad film—it just didn't work commercially—*Cappuccino* is a stand-out. That was a real pity.

**You have been quoted as saying that *Waiting* was a disappointment.**

The media was very responsive to the film and gave it a lot of coverage, but the media in past didn't connect to the members we had hoped for. It's certainly tough persuading Australians to come and see an Australian film. I think that if *Waiting* had been a French production it would have done a lot better.

But while *Waiting* has been a disappointment, the producers will see savings from the theatrical release. One of the advantages of *Waiting* as a play on the independent sector is that they tend to cost a lot less to launch.

It is a difficult business handling Australian films, but we're learning how to structure deals so that we're less exposed. We are building up our own theatrical distribution and that gives us a lot more security when we consider a sale. That's one positive outcome of the difficulties we have experienced in meeting audiences and the trade in Australian films. We've had to become a lot more self-reliant and building other sources of income, like our theatrical.

Our own new-wave Australian financiers want to get involved as early as we can. Involvement differs from film to film. We've done the lot directly invested under BIFA, provided distribution and marketing guarantees, and marketing advances. There's no set formula. The strategy which we are involved in is becoming executive producers (on *Many Talks*).

A film we have currently in postproduction is *Shanty Ashborn*, directed by Rex Laframboise, a young Turk from the Australian Opera. As well, *Aye, Days and Hobbes* on the River News are awaiting release.

**How important are the ancillary rights?**

We don't do a thorough deal unless we can get video, partly because we are interested in the educational video market and we try to get television as well. But often with Australian films they are financed via television producers, so we can't get access to that.

The Australian market produces very low returns for producers on the whole. But there is enough in video to give a distributor like ourselves a bit of security to launch into a theatrical release.

But no, it isn't a big market; you can do a lot better with American or British product. The fact that a film is Australian is something of a liability in the eyes of some home video dealers. *Waiting* probably would have been French for the theatrical market and American for the video market.

**Do you think that the independent scene will come around again to the mainstream marketing of picking up films incoherently recovered at international festivals that which bypass Australia, such as the latest films of Akerman, Verha and Jacques Rivette?**

It would be good if it happened, I agree, but I don't know that we're the ones to do it. Our direction is more toward Australian product. It's an oversaturation of the more likely indie Asian cinema, or regional film events. They are viable commercially and we get a lot of satisfaction out of doing them.

## GEORGE FLORENCE



George Florence, *The Asian Reader*

INTERVIEWED BY BRUCE KILG

Although not directly involved, George Florence appears to be a "film observer" of the U.S. and Independent Chinese Group versus Roadshow court case in Sydney because of the often Roadshow's policy has an effect independent cinema.

**FLORENCE:** There were certain policies implemented long ago which made looking Roadshow film quite difficult in relation to the sort of programming that we normally do, which is consciously single-right copy.

The Roadshow policy, by the way, has sort of been compromised. We've been dealing backwards and forwards with Roadshow for months with letters and what have you, and we've sought tax legal advice independent of the Sydney union. Basically, there are various functions of the Trade Practices Act going on. The problem is that movie has been put paid to start up and up, "Tilly, this is not right. These policies are very restrictive." I think that it's going to shake up the industry. It was the first time the spotlight has been on the industry in such a big way.

**Can you cite examples where the Roadshow policy has left you "high and dry"?**

Over the past two or three years we weren't able to bank any films that were screening in their first city release, which was nearly every major film that we would want to show. Because we bank three months in advance, that meant we had to wrap up nine months before a film, by which time it had either been released on video or had been totally forgotten.

**Is life somewhat difficult without your own distribution arm?**

Our sort of programming doesn't rely on that because we normally only show films for one night. We don't generally release films for one-night seasons, the exception being where we

support new prints of old product. That has been our specialty for the past few years.

**What are the mechanics and costs involved in obtaining a print for a single night?**

When we show a film for a single night it's not a lot different to a cinema showing a film for a week or two months. You pay a percentage, which for us for a new film can be as high as 50 per cent of a gross, but generally averages around 35 per cent. The difference with us compared to a lot of other cinema is that we don't get any allowance for advertising or operating expenses. So, we pay a fairly high percentage on film hire.

**Do you have a set criterion for your programming? You have a wide range of product.**

Yes, new and old. That formula has worked very well and has been developed over quite a few years.

What we've done with *The Asian Reader* is make an alternative type of cinema-going popular. We present a broad cross-section of film to a very broad and large audience. We're sort of popularised the concept of repertory cinema.

**Given that you occasionally show a mainstream film, do you think you can call *The Asian* a truly independent cinema?**

We're as independent as anyone. To survive, we have to depend on 15 different distributors, Roadshow being the main one, for supplied film. We run over a lot of product.

**How did you obtain revival prints of old films such as *Lawrence of Arabia*?**

*Lawrence* was part of a worldwide reissue of the reconstructed print. Other titles we have undertaken to reprint, like the group of about 11 reissues from UIP and about 10 from Columbia. We actually buy the prints and pay freight duty and then the film company gets in film houses of that. There is no risk whatsoever to the film company.

It is a very expensive proposition. When you take into account that prints cost \$1000 to \$3000 each on a double feature, and we pay the promotional costs and film hire, we basically break even. The good thing is that we are beginning to build up the library of older titles in Australia, which has been depleted over the years. In the long term, a benefit is because we are able to screen them again.

**Is there is a big future in revival cinema?**

In the U.S., there are more to make it for now than in this here. A group of directors, including Scorsese and Woody Allen, has been getting together the idea of having classic cinema within the major companies preserve and release all the titles they hold. There are glaring examples where there's

been major problems in securing good-quality prints. The negative is *James Bond*, for example, which we made a new print of, was in such a deteriorated state that the print we were sent was virtually unusable. We had to run a studio copy.

**Was that a costly exercise?**

Costly because we had to import another print—(the unreleasable print itself was valued at about \$3000). That indicates it's not treated very seriously amongst the major companies which now control the libraries.

**In box-office terms, can you cite any revival films that have performed exceptionally well?**

The box-office re-run has even started some of the distributors. We got good feedback from Columbia in the U.S. when they got our *Figaro* and *Lawrence of Arabia*, which screened over a week and grossed about \$44,000.

**What have been some of your disappointments in recent years?**

It's hard to hold high expectations for every thing because a lot of it is fairly risky. Two Eerie Dents films that we brought in—*No Ties* and *The Old Man*—didn't perform that well. But all averages out and makes a viable in the long term.

The biggest disappointment I've had is when we've approached other cinema owners if they are interested in contributing to the cost of these prints and I've just met with a big blank, "No." We have been the only ones paying for the last batch of films that we brought in from Columbia.

**When do you think the exhibition market for independent films is broken?**

It's hard to know where the industry is heading from one minute to the next. For us, in particular I see a healthy future, mainly because *The Asian* is a unique venue. There is much more film screening now than there was 10 years ago. I think sales are terrible as it is in some ways, has made people more film conscious.

**How do you go about promoting your films given that you haven't got a distribution arm behind you?**

We rely on our base audience via mail and publicity brochures. We also have a very helpful network of spontaneous people in the media who support us. We also take out television advertising material on Channel 9, which is expensive but I think reaches a very wide audience. You need to recognise audiences.

The key element is that people have to want to see that film. If it's a film that people don't want to see you could drop 10 million free tickets by helicopter and no one would turn up.

**BRAN NUE DAE; THE COMFORT  
OF STRANGERS; THE COMMITMENTS;  
DUTCH; HUNTING; AND, PROOF**



**ABOVE: JERRY GRIFF, PETER MURRAY  
AND CAPTAIN IN THE COMFORT  
OF STRANGERS**

**OPPOSITE PAGE: DAVID GUNTER, PETER  
AND JERRY DANCING AT HUNTING  
IN 1950-51 IN PETER SCHUBERT'S  
THE COMMITMENTS BY SCHUBERT**

**BRAN NUE DAE**

MANCIE REEVE

**T**he song "Bran Nue Dae" is deeply moving. It tells the story of the early struggles for land rights in Western Australia and the fight of Aborigines for dignity. The song (and its song-writer Jerry Chi and his group Kookles) should be an AussieMusic classic.

That they are not simply eager to reinforce the knowledge that while Australia's treatment of the continent's original black inhabitants is as racist as it has ever been. This is neither a newer original observation. It should, however, be an observation that creates more distress and anger than it does among white liberals and radicals.

Evidence of the loss of momentum of outrage about Australia's treatment of its Aborigi-

nal population is hard to gauge. But there is no doubt that Tim Zalyayel's film *Bran Nue Dae*, reflects this condition.

It is a documentary in the most conventional sense. Despite what, bordering on the macho etc., it covers the terrain with busy disregard for the telling story it is telling. It is an almost soulless film, whose only purpose seems to be to attract an audience to the intense joys of Aboriginal music and the recognition to Jerry Chi, who wrote "Bran Nue Dae" and the music of the same name.

Too painful to have to write such comments in a review, but after many years waiting on the production of a book about Aboriginal music, I probably have different perspective to others. My comments are engendered in part by a plethora of positive reviews and articles that I've received in the mainstream media from Aus-

film's agenda setting resources.

They seemed keen to dip into their fat bags of supervisor's fat ways of congratulating the film and the filmmaker. This congratulatory busy-work (see below) *this is a film about Aboriginal mortality* in personating and personae. We should have passed a long way beyond this attitude to our Aboriginal peoples and stopped congratulating them for things we would not expect inspectors also.

*Brown Australia* is an unfortunately poor film. It is based on a cutting edge, innovation of a point of view. It was made through a community of artists (by Gili and friends at Fremantle) but that seems a poor excuse for its quality.

It is a short about Jimmy Gili a stage musical, but we discover very little at the start of it. We do discover quite a lot about Jimmy Gili who is a stage musical. He is probably the most articulate Aboriginal artist in the country. His ability to write and sing songs with passion has stood for many years as a beacon for Aboriginal musicians. Another Aboriginal who needed someone at his side as an intellectual, critic and leader of the community.

Gili's role in establishing the Brisbane Aboriginal Music Corporation, as well as its role for free environments in urban areas, is not well-known. The film tells us nothing about his social function or his role in these organizations. The absence of such details may well have been included in the brief given to Zubovskiy, but that absence only serves to rob the film and its story of an appropriate context.

The musical itself has been staged in most capital cities and has generated considerable interest, as the first Aboriginal musical. But the telling of the story of *Brown Australia* does seem to be unhelpful in about the musical or its production. The film founders along, unpleasantly the life of Gili, which is interesting, and can't really get by with this musical.

The musical, which I have not seen, is an important landmark in Australian musical history. Unfortunately, the documentary does nothing to enhance its appeal with a sound quality of live performances which should be unacceptable in the 1990s and rejected by funding bodies which have believed this project to maintain acceptable production standards.

There is no joy in reviewing bad film. There is even less joy in reviewing films about a past subject which fail to meet any expectations. Alternatively, it is probably unfair for a relative specialist in Aboriginal music like myself to be reviewing this film.

No doubt there are aspects of the film that serve a purpose, not least among those is the political and practical function of publishing Aboriginal songs. But nothing can offset the despoilment of a performance in which this film.

**BRUCE WILKINSON** (University of Western Australia) Producer: Tom Zubovskiy, Executive producer: Chris McGowan, Director of photography: Joel Paterson, Editor: Ray Thomas, Narrator: Stephen Allen, Music: Kylie Ann, Carl, Emily Gilling (Jodie Taylor), John Moore (Willie), Marjorie Samuels (Auntie Theresa), Bill Fogarty (Father Benedict), John Productions, Australian distributor: Screen 35, 100, 10, 100, Australia 1991.

## THE COMFORT OF STRANGERS

RAYMOND YOUNG

Paul Schrader and Harold Pinter, at first glance, would seem to have little in common. One is steeped in the configuration of the transcendental, particularly in the films of God, Breton and Dreyer, and is preoccupied with marginal, displaced and/or forwarded individuals; the other is fascinated by the dynamics of interpersonal manipulation, the craft of cinema, and the transformation of power structures. The tension between the respective preoccupations is one of the aspects that make *The Comfort of Strangers*, which was scripted by Pinter (and a novel by Ian McEwan and directed by Schrader, such an intriguing work. Colin (Pinter) himself and Mary (McEwan Richardson) return to Venice to test their secret their relationship and future. What they do not realize is that Robert (Christopher Walken), a regularly strange figure, is observing them. Slowly, they are drawn into his world. The consequences are quite serious.

Schrader, if I may be said, could have had major problems. Robert and Richardson are the rather momentous of their (re)turn. One can of a *Deadly Pleasure* (Pinter) (Patty Hearst), but Schrader elicits solid performances. Walken's talents have been wasted in many roles, but the role of Robert in the most vivid and complex since his role in *The Deer Hunter*. He performs with grace and subtlety (though he does have some problems with the accent).

As mentioned earlier, one of the most remarkable aspects of the relation between Schrader's interest in the ways in which the family and society alter perceptions and outlooks, and Pinter's interest in the penetration of a seemingly secure domain by a menacing outsider who is enigmatic and potentially hostile. The film certainly explores some troubling and provocative issues, relationships with deeply embedded tension – also crucially becomes the outward sign of the past that can separate lovers – where language becomes a struggle against the unnamed, the unspoken,

relationships which involve domination by the past and the legacy of his, and the double-edged sword that is obsession, a driving force that demands fulfillment and yet destroys the very subject that seeks to be fulfilled.

Such issues are heightened by the style. The searching camera slowly descends through the empty corridors and chambers, interlarded with the past and evokes the unbroken sequence that links the dead past with the living present; the measured descent also reinforces the subject of the past (in terms of desire as well as the only truth). Total killing and the freedom of static, wide shots serve to bring the seemingly discontinuous strands of the narrative close and closer together until they fuse in the image of the double-sided mirror. Venice, itself, is portrayed as the classical past that is a symptom of social and political decline in *Venice* a *Deadly Pleasure*, not as the source of immense pleasures in *Forza* (Don't Look Now). Robert is in a state of a tragedy – an image that also reinforces the sense of individuals who have difficulty understanding themselves and others, and who cannot believe the ends to which their actions lead. Venice in Schrader's film is a city of phantoms whose influence is palpable and pervasive, especially in Robert's life. And Schrader does not ignore the ugly aspects of the disfigured stones, the dark and dirty back alleys, the crevices and shadowy regions (though he does not need the postcard views either).

The film's keen critical writer's number of scenes for being too far its depiction of women as passive sufferers, and for its depiction of the city. The third criticism has been mentioned above. The first criticism is not really valid since the details, the details are fragmented, the pictures which are repeated and the in-sistent glimpses of the past, are meticulously intertwined – the measured pacing is necessary to allow such things to be emphasized and to factors the cumulative effect of the whole. (This is a film where the cumulative story is the main focus.) The second criticism is based on a misunderstanding. Pinter's screenplay sug-





supreme apologist, universally disliked by the band, which begrudgingly acknowledges his fine singing talent. Devo and Jimmy's relationship is a mirror to that of Jude and Christ: in that Jimmy has a soft spot for the singer who later "betrays" him in front when audience-bry-dealer Joe "the manager" backed up.

There are two key scenes in *The Commitments* worth noting. One involves an incident which occurs during the band's first paid gig. Jeremy is paid back but is then tricked by Pops into demanding payment for gear the band is using. The band members witness the fight and their performance deteriorates, during which the drummer fleeces (Dave Rinnegan), a freedom trap, leaps from the stage and head butts the bandleader, insulting Jeremy. Jay "the Lip" in the meantime, orders the band to keep playing and is shortly joined by the fleeing Jeremy who proudly introduces each band member to the crowd, amidst cheers and applause. It is in a scene which parallels the band members' faith in communion of kindred spirit and one's place.

The second key scene—the stress and embarrassment of the film—also occurs during a gig and hinges on the stress of understating Wheezer Pothead. Prior to going on stage, Jimmy attempts to ease his band's nerves. Jimmy is going to sleep by star he share and pet with the group. He massages the band to perform at their best in the crowd, the rock press budge for Jimmy and scooped. Jimmy poses dramatically. Audience cheer. Band members and the manager are in a state of anticipation and stress.

(Parker sends the head of the scene right off with some close-ups of a woman's face that elegantly pulls out to a two-shot, a crash down into a gutter and... with a shock of the reveal. The head is glowing in light. (Clea is whipping him off into a frenzy and the crowd is excited) Parker fails to show and this sends a nervous tension explodes into a giant back mass.)

(Jimmy) depressed by Fekert's non-appearance, disgusted by the sight of the brewers and hurt by Goro's on-stage kiss, departs as he might the same way he is first introduced as a lover.

Farber has given states very fine performance from his young ensemble cast. Centers appear initially are wide and shots are long which become medium close-ups, and close-ups as the pace and plot develops.

Parke's penchant for single talent heightened by impractical largesse, which at times is depicted and contrasted (and almost always works marvellously in *Monty Python's Flying Circus*) about virtually in *Parade* in the 20th century, is somewhat replaced by the Dublin and the working class of the 19th century. The whole scene is a little bit of a mess, but what's the point? It's not too much to venture to say that the film is a modern day *Monty Python's Flying Circus*.

The Commitments, like all of Parker's films, will polarize audiences, but its structure is interesting. In searching for commitment, the two protagonists find each other. One wonders if Parker shares this pessimistic view?

[illegible]

FALLING AND RISING

**P**eter Falken has allegedly been designing a valley of temples since the phenomenon's outbreak at Crosville Durdle. He appears to have been won over by writer producer John Hughes' roleplay and has again taken the bait to desert Dutch, a road movie about a man and a boy discovering their mutual affinity for classical music. *Unlikely still to be*

At the beginning of the film, we see Frankie (Liam Williams) at an exclusive party of his co-subscribed friends, suffering the third of a dozen while he performs. Dutch (Ed O'Neil), his employer the house, is going to attempt to put the audience against the wealthy and as well as really presenting Dutch as a non-serious, unprofessional, unrespectable guy who is shamelessly shows up here as a deflated and glibble the film can be when he really finds the carrier from his boss's a no-nonsense approach. Helped by someone familiar with an alien environment, he really identify with Dutch.

Rutelle is keen to spend Thanksgiving with her grandparents again. Doyle (Elton Renshaw) has problems in male appearance and he doesn't get with his rich and successful father. Doyle's unrequited affection for his mother is fueled by his belief that it's solely his mother's fault the marriage blew down, but she didn't "make it work." But Dad has other plans this year and in the usual manipulative fashion, he has his 14th birthday break the unpopular news to Doyle.

Enter Cluffy, the family mouse. He comes up with the beautiful idea of dividing each of his

[illegible]

and Doyle from his explosive parents (standing outside in Atlanta). Both Hamilton and Quaid agree that Doyle isn't going to accept a surrogate father figure in a hurry, but that doesn't leave DuBois "in a communication or a break-through kind of guy . . . and when the smoke cleared I had a new friend." He seems to develop some social confidence. That's a pretty healthy foreshadowing, could prepare him for their first encounter.

Unlike the extensive material in *Home Alone* — our little hero Kevin (Macaulay Culkin) — Doyle is a self-proclaimed sleep talker. His first reaction to the stranger in his room is to jump on him, bound him up and shoot him with his BB gun. Doyle is awakened a high (breast) beat in terror (you see how...), so this is almost too easy. But Dutch has a mission: he is going to bring Doyle home to Chicago whether it means to capture or not.

The best thing about a John Hughes script is that these characters *don't know* it will always get their names rubbed into their own innermost identity, inseparably, when David and likable, funny-guy Dutch Dooley who gives us good-as-he-pets...and more. There are no rules, are new just supposed to be a child—no Dr. Spock here, just good, honest, fighting rules, these purifiers and the funny block. We like Dutch, we're on his side.

The formula that the two siblings didn't just suddenly turn on each other is that they also choose to make the other a dog and set out to prove it by winning points against each other and particularly getting up each other's noses. Actually, Quich is more of an instigating moment (like Gayle, who always maintaining his upper-class pride. But Gayle comes up with the ultimate payback and they are forced to finish their business at the same time.



The journey turns into a full-blown mission as they determine all obstacles and Dutch gets to know what life is like after the Doyle divorce: a sense of humility through hardship and intent to think less selfishly. More important, the return of the order, the struggle to risk it home is time for the all-important Thanksgiving supper, brings him closer to his mother.

John Hughes' off-beat dialogue propels the story forward. In Dutch, his character is largely unrepresented, relying on dialogue for laughs. Dominant are the jokes — their setting and structure — are pure Hughes, such as a telephone prelude by Dutch when he attempts a karmic inspired look. He also employs comic economy to good effect, as in the early scene when Dutch decides to deflect Doyle from school. We see Katelee and Dutch discussing their plan of action, he is good guy because he is preparing the evening meal. In the next scene, their conversation is continued at a restaurant and told with a huge laugh of surprise.

It is tempting to speculate that this last rate could have been killed by Paul Hogan. *Knockin' on Ed O'Hair's* well just as the likable lunkhead. Dutch Doyle, who acts the clown with ease and without injuring his ego or appearing foolish. Each gag or look shows him looking really pleased with himself, a goofy grin revealing his tongue pushed in behind his teeth. It is kind of endearing, I guess.

Yet Dutch is a tough guy who makes Katelee from the start to a not to be outdone by any kid. "In my world you're about as trouble-free as a cloudy day." He's not thick, he's a clown and enjoys being a big kid without seeming too childish. Why should kids have adults fun? This attitude is best exhibited in the scene where Dutch tries to prove a smile from Doyle when he releases a snarl with a white forehead. The intention of the scene is plain. Dutch makes the effort to win over Doyle's friendship. To break the boy's isolation. But, as comedy, the scene is fully felt and it lacks inventive direction.

Ethan Hawke is convincing a cute hurt and angry boy who wants to embrace his father's cool values without thinking of his feelings of others, particularly those of his exiles mother. Jeffrey Williams is also competent in his role as Hazelle, although her scenes are few and her character is thinly sketched. Her appearance at the opening and closing of the film cap it like a set of bookends.

For his return as feature director, Fainman's choice is apt. *Dutch* is a teen comedy about a relevant subject: "teapartners" getting to know their partner's children, always a prickly obstacle. The character of Dutch is well-developed; the film is not about his personal journey to much as Doyle's.

There are a few players in this film, but I wouldn't call it a comic masterpiece. To its credit, it avoids a sentimental treatment of the "getting to know you" theme and treats the adult characters in reasonably credible situations. Hughes does not pass judgement on their actions or subsequent predicaments, he simply explores a situation of acceptance and enjoys deftly guiding the progression of events.

rather than mapping out the path for our sympathies or a heavy-handed way. Coupled with his unique sense of humor and vibrant sense of country and rock songs, it makes for a light and entertaining film with a warm core.

**CAST:** Directed by Peter Faiman. **Producers:** John Hughes, Richard Yano. **Executive producer:** Terje Gjelstad. **Screenplay:** John Hughes. **Director of photography:** Charles Bishop. **Production designer:** Ben Jellery. **Costume designer:** Jennifer Parsons. **Editors:** Fred Hsieh, Adam Rowland, Camarion Scott. **Music:** Curt Bruchman (guitar), Allen Kleider (drums), Judith Williams (bass), Christopher Mulholland (Piano). **Art Director:** Steven J. G. Oakley (design). **Score:** Scott Desautels. **Production offices:** Kathleen Foxworth (Dallas), Gateway Film Associates/distributors (Haga, Moen). **114 mins. U.S. 1991.**

## HUNTING

BY BEN KORN

**L**ately, Backstreet Films has a reputation for producing melodramatic soap operas. The group's newest cinematic film noir, *Hunting*, is at the very least a significant step in a brave direction. It is an involving tale that leads a film's dark themes with considerable flair and imagination, writer-director producer Frank Howard encouraging to branch into the human psyche, melding subconscious vision with a tightly stylized sense of reality.

The result is a moody looking, pretty indulgent picture which is hard to place in the Australian movie experience. It has the makings of a psychological drama, the atmosphere of a Romantic study and the stylistic elements of a fable. Although it is flawed along the way by some patches of weak scripting and erratic pacing, *Hunting* is still a commendable first up effort by Howard.

As central character is Michael Bergman (John Savage), an American news metropolitan who moves to Melbourne to chase up his business empire, a local news headline in the opening reveals that Bergman has his eye on "greater media interests".

Savage handles his first appearance in an Australian film by appearing in a stockbroker's office "as if by magic" to the surprise of a (flaw) secretary, Michelle Harris (Kerry Armstrong). After a bit of nervous eye-contact, some apparently idle dialogue and a cup of split coffee, Bergman events to become quite some sort of a split on Michelle.

In these first early moments, the apparent sexual chemistry between Bergman and Michelle is neither credible nor convincing, which is a problem, considering it sets the tone for the entire film. Howard's explanatory device for their attraction comes in the unusual form of a subliminal frame of a moth being drawn to a candle. Pretty soon, the moth has been lured into the flame, so to speak, and the pair are smothered in an illicit affair of far-reaching consequences. Michelle is cheating on her down-and-out husband, Larry (Jeffrey Thomas), for one, and retaining the guilt of her Catholic upbringing.

The attraction reveals a darker side to society that exists Bergman. By degree, one learns he is a cynical egotist who has negated his aspirations and now is satisfied himself with white candles.

Bergman's methods are unorthodox at a few figures, fictional and real. He manoeuvres his way through as an international salesman.

**Michael Bergman (John Savage), Michelle Harris (Kerry Armstrong), Larry Thomas (Jeffrey Thomas), Susan (Susan Armstrong), and others.**





right group (Rupert Murdoch) pontificating about the damage of Thatcherism and apartheid (Gillian Triggs) and manipulating with charm and ruthless intent (Don Davies).

Initially, Savage is portrayed as afflicted by a type of one-dimensional detachment and he is burdened by a script that does not allow a rough night to his wife. Why his wife would do a take with more bones than he can count choose a divorced lesbian for his location for a sexual encounter with a woman he is out to impress?

No doubt some of these questions are confined to build an idiosyncratic aura around Bingham, but it is only in the latter half of the film that the character comes to fit. Armed with that brooding, maligned attitude he is intent on pugnacity in films like *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Murder a la Mode*, Savage comes into his own at the first bedtime rule of his film career.

The turning point occurs not very far through when he and Bingham's newly lacking relations (Guy Pearce and Nicholas Bell) pay a visit to the new-Bingham and his lover are cheating. It is here that Howard demonstrates his skill as best as the camera and in the editing room. To an evocative tune from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, images of the protagonist seducing a party girl across the scenes, interspersed with the brutal slaying of Lacey, who knows too much.

The camera doesn't quite measure up to the brilliant baptism/murder sequence in *The Day After Tomorrow*, although visual clarity is almost flawless all round. At once it illustrates how potent it is to play the game and to play it, and underlines the consequences of summing oneself to the rule of power.

For all its polish, however, *Therapy* stands up as a sensitive oversight concerning Lacey's

death. While the camera makes it obvious he has been severely battered, the script would try to have viewers believe that Malborough's telephone procedures are the plan to dispose his murder as a "suicide".

It is hard to believe why Howard did not make this development more credible by pulling in a few extras and leaving it an open-ended killing. That said, Hasting goes around each problem with a leaning toward who is better in reference to fact and, in this case, logic.

When Hasting stands out from most Australian films is that its characters are not just able to fit a specific sociopolitical environment, they are also more or less self-sufficient with no geographical context. Many of the scenes are set in a linked by general social conditions, insight, and social action. An impression, sweeping darkness, like the edges of his first film shadows in a partially covered character during physical moments. It never rains in Bingham's world, a only point and he finds closed doors Bingham is forever enclosed by circles.

With the help of his assistant in the, Howard designs his scenes with symbols, dreams and twisted images. The effect of the symbol is presumably a slight metaphor to the film's subject involving the way a character's "light" may be partly subjectively and to the figures of darkness. A book dealing with the subject *The Master of Death* by Wilhelm Reich, is mentioned in the credits.

The style of the film may be considered excessive by some, inspired by a few which, over time, it is hard to ignore. The visuals are complemented by a soundtrack which ranges from Marc Jordan and *The Card* by a John French and David Henegau score (which appears to a *Chatterbox* Change) that sound like Roger Savage also makes a strong contribution by engineering in a pulsing back that sets the tone for the film's most powerful scene.

While Hasting is not a happy film, it does not allow itself to become oppressed by its themes. Every occasion is a clear sign of intention, from up to a soundtrack to the film. In one instance, a broken man stands silently of a telephone screen as a beautiful George Bailey (James Brown) looks for to fit a *Therapist's Life*. The telephone voice of the *Therapist's* never really happens to belong to John Waters, and Bingham looks his soul as a group of associates of a dinner party only to have one of them (Thyia MacCormack) come clean about her life.

One, however, does not need to look hard to find a low point, particularly in the area of scripting and editing. While Savage and to a lesser extent, Anthony, inevitably fit their roles with substance (the performance overall) are limited in scope and marred by overstatement. One might have expected more from Guy Pearce and Bingham's right-handman, but the fairly obvious a way to fit into a path of personality through the entire film. New Zealand's Jeffrey Thomas is convincing and believable as a man who is betrayed twice and to a job by the people that come to rely

on him entirely in a violent first film that \$2 million. Hasting has a first feature that comes with his more impressive work in film. The scene works as David Cornell and Don Davies give Malborough the task of a crime police investigation, which will help Boulevard market the film as an "international" product.

Howard says he has attempted to "push the ropes" with Hasting and create a picture that is a step into the right direction for Australian film. After a screening of the film at the 1990 AFI Awards (which is now widely criticized) an industry figure reportedly told Howard Hasting would be a hit if it had the stars Peter Goss and David Lynch on it. Even if the camera's captured an element of social history, it is something to think about.

**CASTING** Directed by Howard Howard. Produced by Frank Howard. Executive Producer: Peter Ragle. Line Producer: Noel Taylor. Scriptwriter: Peter Howard. Director of Photography: David Cornell. Don Davies. Production Designer: John Davies. Costume Designer: Stephen Kavanagh. Sound Designer: Roger Savage. Editor: Philip Field. Composer: John Waters. Music Supervisor: Don John Davies. Music Supervisor: Mary Armstrong. (Melissa Hagg) Jeffrey Thomas (Guy Pearce). Rebecca Hagg (Dorothy MacCormack). Mary MacCormack (John Waters). Guy Pearce (David). Rebecca (Guy Pearce). Executive Film Australia/Photofest. Screenwriter: John Davies. Australia, 1991.

## PROOF

KARL DUNN

**M**artin (Guy Pearce) is a brilliant, emotionally repressed, fairly recent thing, that who uses an elaborate camera to take photographs of the world he cannot see. He has a collection of snapshots, pictorial images of the things he cannot see, but he has no framework of verification of proof external to himself. Martin is not just a handsome scientist, through his collection of his experience, and a collection to Andy (Katie Couric).

At first, Andy seems an unlikely choice of candidate for the studio, but Martin, who seems to be living by and by, doesn't think it is a mistake for a female magazine (i.e. one that is a collection of images) to have a male photographer. Martin's occupation is occupation is more complicated in the film, though the camera on his desk, hints at some such activity. Andy is a little bit, a not confused, no-gooder, whose apparent sense with his looks a deep rooted sense of failure. What attracts Martin to Andy is the lack of a lack of a lack. As Martin tells his weekend friend, "I like your style, simple, direct, honest." These are qualities which Martin obviously is also not missing in the only other living person of any significance in his life, his housekeeper, Emily (Elizabeth Perkins). Emily is a little bit, a not confused, no-gooder, whose apparent sense with his looks a deep rooted sense of failure. What attracts Martin to Andy is the lack of a lack of a lack. As Martin tells his weekend friend, "I like your style, simple, direct, honest." These are qualities which Martin obviously is also not missing in the only other living person of any significance in his life, his housekeeper, Emily (Elizabeth Perkins). Emily is a little bit, a not confused, no-gooder, whose apparent sense with his looks a deep rooted sense of failure. What attracts Martin to Andy is the lack of a lack of a lack. As Martin tells his weekend friend, "I like your style, simple, direct, honest." These are qualities which Martin obviously is also not missing in the only other living person of any significance in his life, his housekeeper, Emily (Elizabeth Perkins).

The film opens on Martin walking briskly down a Melbourne freeway, the camera following





MAKING GOOD BEHAVING MARTIN WITH ANASTASIA-LUX  
AT THE WOODBURNER, A BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HOUSE

ing in his side is in close-up. We then get a close-up of his face, complete with dark glasses. This is not then quite back to reveal Martin is tall, a tall man, wearing a white coat and carrying a camera, and walking with much more confidence than we might expect. The scenes of misadventure, so cleverly placed together to one flowing movement, suggest it is in the opening moments of the film that the relationship between people, objects and their meanings is not so self-evident as it appears. (Fitting is here, is elsewhere in the film, a central metaphor: how we frame the world determines what we can know of and about it.) But just as we might be willing to see comfortably the reassessment of our initial responses ("Well, why shouldn't a blind man be that self-reliant?"), Martin crashes into the boxes of rubbish which have spread from the rear of a helicopter into the freeway, thereby proving how to us what are the foundations of his confidence. Martin can know his physical environment only as long as nobody prevents the places around.

So it is with Martin's emotional world. But the only way he can exclude unpredictable shifts in the emotional framework is to exclude emotionality in his life: we see ample justification for Martin's behaviour – yet we also see none. He is blind to Celia because he senses that to allow her to love him, to allow himself to love her, would irreversibly alter the balance of power's integral to their relationship. He must prohibit the inconvenience of Celia moving objects around the house out of sight to the permanent disorientation of sight (thus for him, into his life) for. At a deeper level, his rejection of Celia's advances stems from multiple sense of lack. Of primary importance is, of course, the

lack of sight, which has made Martin so dependent on others, except that he refuses to accept this position with the grace that the sightless blind almost demands. He also suffers from the absence of the mother whom he suspects of having taken her death in order to escape the burden of her fatal eye. And there is his father's unexplained absence of the to this.

While Martin's acceptance of Andy seems to him implied the gain of his character, it makes sense instead as Andy apparently wants nothing other than friendship. Andy, a student of Martin's sister at many in return for the coffee the hand of photographs he keeps a card that Celia has presumably failed to pass. Martin clearly resents Celia's desire to have it but wages, as a paid employee and as a potential lover. He looks disinterested and distant for what he feels is his temporary attitude, and so avoids her eyes, which comp to the rule to pay her (there is more story here than just a question of money), and suddenly asks "How much do I owe you?" which she takes a note in favour of her own birthday. The note of course, as usual, importance again at the end of the film, when Martin takes out what he calls "The most important photo I have ever taken" in order to ask Andy for one that description. As Andy describes the photograph, it becomes clear that everything that had passed between them to this point was secondary to this act. This moment of proof. For in it, Martin's entire relationship to his father – father's based on the assumption that she had had to him simply because she could – is altered too, too, is his relationship to the world at large, for just he entered his frame of knowledge, however passively.

Martin's quibus with background information aside (What does Martin do for a living?

What happened to his is that? Why does he own a cat? a huge house?"). *Proof* is an extremely accomplished film. Through grace has been added upon it already that anything and here suddenly be replication. (And I must, however, take issue with those reviews which speak of the film as having an "almost European quality". The film seems to me not a native Melbourne to show its origins very clearly in architecture, the same ways (perhaps) to drive in and the diverse ethnicity of point to Melbourne not the much more homo-geneous cities of Europe. Melbourne herself suggests that the tendency to see the film as European is only too ready to do with the darkness and the sense of claustrophobia permeates the film (as a visual allegory for Martin's vision-less world), but with any definable stylistic similarities.

This sense to find points of reference outside Australian film culture prompts one to wonder if what is at play in the integration of *Proof* is not some vestige of the dreaded cultural cringe, which we supposedly shook off a decade ago. One must ask if the film would have been as well received here had it not gained such a high profile prior to release, courtesy of the Cannes Film Festival. How often is an Australian feature by a first director, shown at an international cinema, yet advertised on commercial television? How many Australian films receive nationwide distribution from a major company like Roadshow? I don't ask these questions in order to challenge the wisdom of showing such support to *Proof*, merely to ask why such attention is not evident in relation to local cinema on a more regular basis. Has *Proof* done as well merely because it is a wonderful film, or because international critics believe it was a wonderful film? While *Priority* deserved the accolades it has received, this is I believe, an important question to answer if the much-blogged second wave of Australian cinema is to have any impact at either self-sufficiency or longevity.

**PROOF** Directed by Joseph Meehan. Producer Lynda House. Scriptwriter: Joseph Meehan. Camera of photography: Mark McGarth. Production designer: Patrick Pearson. Sound recorded: Lloyd Corbett. Editor: Peter Griffin. Music: Neil O'Donoghue. Writing: Carl Hugo-Wessing (Music: Carraway Foot (Celia), Russell Crowe (Andy), Heather Mitchell (Martin's mother), Jeffrey Mack (Youngman), Mark Galloway (Neil), Patrick J. Nelson (Barry), Susan Ford (Marilyn), House & Moorehouse. Australian title: *Subliminal Roadshow*. Shows 18 mm. Australia: 1991.

COMPILED BY FRED HARDEN

# 70mm —The Judgement Day

BEING GIVEN A PLATFORM  
SUCH AS THIS TO STAND ON,  
IT IS HARD NOT TO WANT TO  
STRETCH ONESELF AND LOOK OVER  
THE HORIZON, TO TRY AND  
SYNTHESIZE THE INFORMATION  
FLOWING AROUND YOUR FEET  
INTO SOME VIEW OF THE FUTURE.  
IN THE WHIRL OF AN INFORMATION  
WORLD DOMINATED BY INNOVA-  
TIONS IN ELECTRONICS AND TELE-  
VISION, THERE IS A PLEASANT  
FEELING THAT FILM, AFTER BEING  
LEFT OFF THE INVITATION LIST FOR  
A LONG TIME, IS GOING TO AGAIN  
JOIN THE GANGE.

Talk to someone with James Cameron in the August issue (No. 84) of *Cinema Magazine* and you have done the lot to help Australian *Turnerator 2: Judgement Day* (reel) sales to what was, as Melody would call it, a "factor" opening 70mm are not behind the scenes stores to the \$100 million budget film. The glowing publicity digital aspect-ratio and a test for the release of the new DSD sound in 35mm format is a test that let *Kinky's* to ask, is there a possible "Digital Cinema for 70mm?"

*Turnerator 2* was the first major 35mm release with the new DSD digital sound. DSD, as mentioned in our June issue, is the audio system developed by the Motion Picture and Television Production/Production Studios Kodak Company in Hollywood, New York, and Optical Reduction Corporation, in Austin, California.

Introduced in May 1990 in 70mm, the DSD system allows for six tracks, five full bandwidth channels and a sub-woofer channel. The latter is used for low frequency bass tones. In contrast, current 35mm stereo systems provide two discrete tracks on the film that are mixed to four channels in sound.

In addition to the six discrete audio channels, there is a MDC (Motion Picture Digital Interface) control channel, a synchronization track containing SMPTE time code (which puts a machine-readable address on each frame), and various identification labels, such as the number of the film. The data sequences referred and similar information. The control channel can be used for both end frame volume, and for synchronizing in-line a special effects (moving the sound and adding windows or layers inside the frame space seem to be the most mentioned way to "significantly simplify the movie-going experience"). Did the sales pitch for you, dear?

The CD-quality sound is recorded as an optical track that allows creating control prints to be used to make release prints with Cinema Digital sound; current 70mm sound is on magnetic tape. In the U.S., the DeLuxe CFI and Technicolor labs in Hollywood have been making DSD prints.

To get that output of tracks in quality around sound previously required a 70mm print with that bigger format's room for multiple magnetic tracks. In the U.S., especially a number of features are blown up from 35mm to 70mm for release, consequently with standard 35mm. Melody quoted a figure of less than 150 cinemas that show about a dozen features a year in 70mm. The latest release is a 35mm print with analogue optical stereo tracks with the Dolby system of encoding near surround tracks.

35mm with DSD offers better quality sound without the expense involved in the blow-up to 70mm. The prices quoted in U.S. dollars were "under \$2000" for a 35mm print as against the "17,000 to \$10,000" for a 70mm with magnetic tracks. The lower 35mm print price reveals that it is fairly drastically less to be a feature that is getting established and more to be replaced, but the bottom line for the acceptance of the DSD system may well have been provided by the results for the release of *Turnerator 2*.

In San Francisco, one theatre was running a 70mm and a 35mm DSD print of *Turnerator 2* in the same complex. The 35mm print averaged the 70mm screenings in the opening week by 8%, in the second week, it was 15%. Melody reports that data provided by *Weekend* indicated that 35mm DSD prints grossed 40% more than standard analogue stereo prints playing in the same multiplexes.

Theatre chains have been cautious about the new digital processes with a wait-and-see approach to DSD and the competing Dolby SR-D system due out in 1992. The other consideration is cost — about \$20,000 to equip each theatre for DSD. The LATC (United Artists Theatre Chain) had only four DSD theatres across the U.S. as of August. For *Turnerator 2* they utilized 18 theatres and advertised them by LATC Senior Vice President Howard Coleman was quoted as saying the results were "phenomenal".

## THE SMALL DETAILS

The latest DSD press releases contain some extra information about using the process that I found interesting.

In 35mm format, the standard used on prints to record the optical soundtrack is wide enough to contain the signal sound track. However, the optical soundtrack on a 70mm print is slightly larger than the magnetic track which is currently used.

DSD considered a number of possibilities such as putting the track outside the perforations, changing the perforation area or moving it. They came to the conclusion that the highest reliability and the least disruption in existing practices in 70mm was to put the track in the position of the No. 4 map track, located inside the perforations on one side of the film.

"The reduction in frame area is about 1 percent on each side," Ronald E. Unip, a group leader in the electronic development section of Kodak's Motion Picture and Television Production division, rather briefly says in the press release.

That should have no impact on the way film are composed. *Cinema Magazine* very rarely use

the extreme edges of the frame in their composition, which most audiences can't see, with 70mm projection, the edges become a black frame around the edges of the picture area.

The reconfigured CDS was introduced first in the 70mm format, but because those theaters being equipped to play back, the 70mm mag tracks already have high-quality tone and surround capability. Only explain:

At 160 lines in detail, this projector with a digital sound pickup head and total a digital processor in the equipment rack. Visually no maintenance or tuning is required.

The pickup head will fit any projector and carries the film digital information. The converter decodes it and separates the digital information and translates it back into sound. Howard Flaming, the programme director for Optical Reduction Corp., explains:

One big advantage of digital sound is the multi-channel techniques that can be applied for an error detection and error correction system in the processor.

Using proven digital technology, such as convolution algorithms, the processor automatically provides an accurate noise digital signal response, this is sometimes called flat.

JOHN YALOWE (FOR HARKING) WITH THE SOUND  
JESSICA AND BOBBI, ROBERT BRANCO AND BOBBI  
BRANCO



Fast forward, the optical heads are used if large gaps of data are damaged or missing, leaving the signal loss to be virtually undetectable to the human ear.

Approximately 60 million bits of data are read and recovered per second, and the process creates a total high-resolution interpretation of modern motion picture films. Kodak's Federal Systems Division also developed proprietary customized integrated circuits (ICs) for the color correction and error-detection systems, to allow for the imaging characteristics of film, the number of channels, etc.

### THE LAST BIG PICTURE

So where does the movie 70mm, if the process is now such as being less than the ultimate? The process at stealing for 70mm an 80mm film means now to be the domain of short films for the specialized theatres in amusement parks. Processes such as 80mm and 16mm will provide the ultimate visual quality and processes like CDS 70mm sound will ensure that the sound quality will remain high on these prints, an important factor considering they screen many times a day. Another of the side benefits is that it eliminates the head wear from mag video tracks.

The last Hollywood feature shot in 80mm was *Clay's War* in 1981. However, the 80mm feature is currently in production or slated as yet. Ron Howard picture starring Tim Gunn. Given the higher cost of track and prints, the big budget block-buster seems the only vehicle left for big 70mm theatrical releases.

### THE LOCAL CONTENT

There was to be a demonstration at the CDS system at the recent AES show in Melbourne, but this was cancelled and no date has been set for further demonstrations. Rod Haley from Greater Union Stage Products Technology (interviewed in issue 78) believes the industry here will play a waiting game to see the Dolby digital system before making a choice, with the number of installed Dolby systems being a big factor in their choice. He believes, however, that the first demonstrations of the Dolby system will not be until December this year, and that Dolby still has only prototype units to show. Haley mentioned that they were offered CDS for the Australian release of *Indiana Jones 2*. If the movie will run here, at least in Dolby Stereo.

### DIGITAL TERMINATION

Termination is the most expensive effects picture that has been made, a factor always relative to the overall picture cost. It certainly will be seen as breaking new ground for special effects and a display of the state-of-the-art in digital compositing.

The effects for *Termination* were produced by Industrial Light & Magic. Like the company George Lucas started in 1975 to create the visual effects for *Star Wars* and it has continued to win awards and break new ground with films such as the Indiana Jones series, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* and *The Abyss*.

Kodak has started a series of interviews called "Innovation in the Film Arts". Richard Kohn supplied me with a copy of the first of the series, which is with the principals of Industrial Light & Magic.

Without the space to print the entire piece, I have chosen the subject with Stuart Robertson, Head of the Digital Department at ILM, with digital total comments from Dennis Murren, film general at ILM and Kodak, for permission to reprint the material here.

Anyone interested and involved in the process of film effects, including cinematographers, should seek out a complete copy. The interview is with Ed James, Director of Post-production, Scott Ross, Group Vice President, Dennis Murren, Visual Effects Supervisor, Stuart Robertson, Head of Digital Department, and Mark DiPace, Assistant Visual Effects Supervisor. Industrial Light & Magic has created visual effects for more than 60 feature films, and built a consistent record winning reputations for its efforts work.

ILM's reputation has been as a leader of computer effects and their integration into feature films. It is the motion picture control technique that adds realistic controlled layer to stop motion animation, and one pioneering work in 3-D transition.

### DENNIS MURREN VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR

Murren relates how he entered special effects movies back to when he was six—an amateur, says he. When he was 14, his parents bought him a 16mm camera, and he experimented with a lot of the special effects techniques we use today. He shot a low budget, not a feature film called *Equinox* while a freshman at Pasadena City College. He worked in the special-effects department at a major commercial production house, and joined George Lucas when he was building a visual effects team for *Star Wars*. Earlier you predicted that this will be the digital decade. What does that mean?

I think we are on the edge of finally doing really good digital work, which is like painting, or modelling something out of plastic. You can take just any part of an image and move it

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around do image processing, and create characters who don't have to follow the laws of physics. I feel that three-dimensional digital work, as opposed to image processing which is 2-D.

**How do you create images with a computer?**

It's kind of like electronic clay. It helps to start with a 2-D model that you can shape the objects, so you can talk about it, hold it up and look at it. Then it's a matter of digitally describing the model into the workstation through a mouse, a keyboard or with a graphic pen. You can assume the shapes like clay, so you can look at it from various angles. You can build a shape and manipulate it through any limitations as long as it works with the image.

**James Cameron has been quoted as saying that the computerized in *The Abyss* seemed not to be exactly what he visualized and that is a great compliment for S.M. What did he visualize?**

He wanted a snake-like projection with a surface that constantly undulated with sort of a random rippling effect. He wanted it to have the texture of water. Our animators designed a snake-like tube with a rounded head. The pod had an imaginary spine, which was basically a line through the centre that was used to control pixel points. By manipulating the pixels, we could create whatever movement he wanted.

We built the pseudopod in 3-D computer space, and then computerized with 2-D images shot on film, the background plates. We actually created 3-D dimensional computer models of the background plates, which accounted for the angles, movements and local lengths of the camera. This created an environment for plotting the moves of the pod.

The most challenging part was creating the rippling effects that made the water snake seem real. That was achieved with a combination of software, timing and animation, and an understanding of how to mix refraction and reflection of light on a moving object. In the end, your sense of the realism is as important as the maximizing of the technology.

**And what is 3-D digital technology?**

That would be image processing. It could involve making electronic composites, colour grading, or creating grade lines with a coloured pen. Maybe a scene was shot one day when there was haze in the air so the sky is tinted of a pale blue, and the director wants it to be a darker blue. The lab will be able to change the sky to whatever blue the director wants without affecting any other blues in the same scene.

I think cinematographers will love this system because they'll have so much more control. If they have a shot of a location scene on a day when the weather is really bad, say, they might use the EXR 5000 film to cast the light

## THE COMPARISON: ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL

Briefly, the specifications figures for CBS read as follows:

**DYNAMIC RANGE:** measures the range of loudness to softness. The higher the number, the broader the range from soft to loud. Conventional 35mm movie sound optical sound typically have a dynamic range of 44 dB to 55 dB depending on the condition of the print. Stereo optical sound in 35mm format ranges from 51 to 58 dB depending on the condition of the print. Analogue in 70mm magnetic format ranges from 78 to 88 dB.

**Cinema Digital Sound** retains a level of around 55 dB for the life of the print. The difference between 70mm magnetic and 70mm digital optical sound is most noticeable in theatres with low background noise levels. The 35 format has over 30mm frequency, stereo optical sound and Cinema Digital Sound in 35mm format is the widest air-to-air.

**CHANNEL SEPARATION** is the system's ability to isolate sounds coming from specific directions or speakers. Conventional 35mm stereo optical sound has separation of a track into channels to another that range from 12 to 40 dB. This can mean that there is a tendency for sound to 'leak' from one

channel into another, so the listener in the theatre will not hear the sound coming from where the producer intended. Magnetic sound in the 70mm format measures at 58 dB level. CBS measures at a 100 dB level. **FREQUENCY RANGE:** for a 35mm optical sound issued track is 20 to 15,000 Hz. For a 35mm stereo optical track, the frequency range is 40 to 15,000 Hz. For a 35mm sound track the frequency range is 50 to 14,000 Hz.

For Cinema Digital Sound, the frequency range is 20 to 20,000 Hz, which is as the edges of a print is 15 dB to 18 dB. The digital system automatically detects and corrects flutter caused by even slight variations in projection speed.

**REPRODUCTION:** One example of this is the subtle distortion associated with higher frequency 'H' sounds. In both 35mm material and reel state, optical sound tracks, in both cases, the range of harmonic distortion is from 1 to 7 percent, primarily depending on the density at which the print was made as well as the nature of the sound. A stereo 70mm print has a harmonic distortion level frequently reaching 3 percent. The average harmonic distortion on a CBS print is 21 percent.

channels. Later they will be able to digitally alter colours, brightness, contrast and even granularity. It will be like being the only guy to do the digital domain, which will give them a lot more control. They'll be able to look at a digital master or a digitally prepared image and say, "Let's pull the red down, and make the visual static more golden across the top of the frame."

**Are there general rules for successful visual effects?**

Mainly percent of the time we shoot live effects in the VistaVision format because we want a larger image area than the 35 film used for production photography. That gives us an edge in matching the image quality of the live-action footage. The ultimate goal for all visual effects is to be seamless. For live action effects that's particularly important for all the special too long but there are always exceptions. The longer the audience has to scrutinise an effects shot, the better the details have to be.

**On Terminator 2 you explored a lot of new territory?**

There are 45 special effects shots containing computer generated or computer altered live agents with live photography. We combined in the background live plates, computer digitally with computer generated graphics. Then we recorded the digital composite onto film.

**What's the difference?**

Once you're in digital format, there's a lot more you can do. The machine is for better. You can do pointwork on individual frames. Maybe you have a nasty imperceptible media line, and it only shows in four frames of film. Once we are in the digital world, we can patch them out.

**Are the same people doing the work in both domains?**

Some of them are. But we also have people who have been working with computer graphics. We are starting to bring the skills of optical camera operators into the digital world. Some of the main use substitutes that computer people don't because they know what to look for. You look at a composite and say in general, "The colour looks great. It looks a little busy going off into the distance, but the outline is too sharp." Most people aren't going to see that. But if you cut that scene into the middle of a movie, it will stand out and be a later. So, I think it is really important for the people who have been doing this kind of work with film to get experience with the computer side. The thing I have been pushing for is simpler and more accessible tools.

**Bytools, you mean computer workstations?**

Yes, and software. How well do you interface with it? How well do you talk to it? How do you talk to it? All of this technology is still evolving.

Six or seven years ago, people were using Cray computers to generate electronic images. Now we are using Silicon Graphics workstations and Macintosh computers. The more affordable and user-friendly these tools are, the more people you can involve in the process. That's important because you want people who have the talent and experience to make the right artistic decisions about content, brightness, colors and all of these elements of the image which can evoke an emotional response.

#### What kind of resolution is required?

It depends on the shot and the script. Some subjects may require 2,000 or 3,000 lines of resolution. If you are creating an image where there's a lot of motion, as you can't see details, you need a better resolution. In *Young Doctor Albert* and *The Pyramid of Power*, there's a computer-generated character, a strategists' map, and he's always walking or moving. We wanted image blur like you would get from a camera's shutter, so the details wouldn't be too sharp. We felt that one shot would be best at 600 lines. If you can get away with that. It's the why/who because there are fewer image data storage requirements, which means you can do everything faster.

Is the goal is to make composites and digitally generated objects and characters look more realistic?

Is that an artistic or a technology decision? Visual effects is both an art and a science. The artistic side is determining how to use technology to make the look convincing.

#### Who decides what the look should be?

The look is usually determined during pre-production meetings with the director, the effects supervisor and an art director.

#### How about the director of photography?

Most of them want to know what we are doing, and we have to match their look. Of course, we are also affected by the improvements in the camera films they use. Camera stocks are getting sharper and finer grained. The Canon 500T film is a remarkable breakthrough in image quality. Film looks in every process and technology. I think all of the 16mm resolution films are big improvements. They are giving us more space with less grain and better contrast. At the same time, lenses are getting sharper. That means you are getting more resolution and more details on film.

#### What are the ramifications for the artists?

We are just scratching the surface. What we consider to be top-of-the-line, like *Terminator 2*, won't be top-of-the-line anymore because it will be more accessible. The ramifications address every aspect of filmmaking. Maybe a director needs a certain shot, but he can't fly out to the location and wait for the weather to get it

him. He can shoot plates on location and make a more believable composite without made films.

#### How about taking a look, not beyond this decade into the next century?

I think we'll see smaller theaters in malls and shopping centers which have simulated rides and fantasy films. If the pace of film continues to speed up, people will be looking for entertainment on the fly. Maybe they'll spend 20 minutes instead of 2 hours seeing a film.

At the same time, I think home entertainment will get bigger.

I don't think there will be a particular year that we will be able to look back to and say that's when digital filmmaking happened. It's going to be an evolutionary process. Maybe a director will use few digital composites in one film, and then 10 in the next one, and then 30. Then, 10 years down the road to the future, we'll realize that we have gone through this transformation. But we'll still be using film optics for more complex composites.

#### STUART ROBERTSON

Robertson went to school at the University of Kentucky, and did graduate work at the Art Institute in Chicago. He worked in optical departments for film labs and visual-effects houses for 15 years, joining ILM in 1980.

#### How do you see visual effects changing and evolving?

There have been two major changes since I came into this business. The use of computers for motion control made an enormous impact during the past seven to eight years, especially in animation graphics. It has made a big difference in determining what you can do. When I started out on an optical camera, there was a lot of hand plotting. Now you can set up automatic moves and make multiple separate passes with absolute accuracy and repeatability. There are only five or six basic manipulators you can perform, like composite, masking things in and out and using computerized motion control allow us to manipulate the possibilities and make much more realistic and sophisticated composites.

#### What's the second major change?

Digitalization. Since we used computer graphics on *The Abyss*, we have had at least two or three aspects in every film where we have done some digital work, usually wire removal. Instead of manipulating images optically, we are scanning the film into digital format, joining the wires out digitally, and then recording back onto film. The key is the evolution of the technology in that we need more film resolution, and that takes a lot of memory. You can compensate by taking time for resolution, since film, unlike video, isn't a real time medium.

#### What does that mean?

If you have to take 4 numbers of pixels to digital format in real time, or at 24 frames per second, you need an enormous amount of computer power and memory. But if you scan or freeze every three seconds, it takes less computer power. That isn't a great problem, since in the visual effects domain, we typically work with one frame at a time.

It can be that you are requiring a number of Macintosh computers, what are they going to be used for?

We are setting up a digital-based compositing and effects facility. At this point, we are using Macintosh computers to do some of the work that has been done in the optical animation and matte-painting departments. This is very much like what is being done in video with Hi-Fi systems. Basically, we will be doing problem-solving work that is resistant to traditional methods. For example, if someone is shooting blue screens, and they get too close to the blue screen, the light will reflect off the object and that light will reflect back onto the screen or block. We call that blue spill. You can remove that problem with much greater flexibility digitally.

On top of that, there is the question of people's shots. The capability that you have in digital is to go in and do retouching — it's almost directly on the film frame — or completely invisible optical effects shots anywhere within the frame. This frees us to do things we haven't been able to before. Let's say you want to integrate film of a hand puppet into a scene. You can now easily make room for that in space, or you can cut shadows that look right. That's a whole class of effects that wasn't possible before. We are really getting into position to apply the same range of possibilities that has taken place in video technology during the past few years to film.

#### So you really need to be able to manipulate a great amount of visual data?

We are working with very large picture files. We are carrying about five times the amount of picture information that you would have in a normal video tape picture file. We are dealing in very high resolution.

#### What do you do after digital compositing is completed? How do you get back onto film?

We are using a film recorder with a high intensity light source. Presently, we have been scanning onto the 5245 film, which is a very large-grain, high-contrast stock.

#### What do you see happening with traditional optical work?

I don't see it going away in the immediate future. The question is: How fast will digital hardware advance? There are things we can do today that you can't do traditionally, but other things take longer. The camera time is

about the same. The total hours spent on about the same three elements, you start to go downhill very rapidly. When you look at film as an information-retrieval device, you realize you can record a vast amount of information very rapidly. So we are hopeful that film will be doing three things quite well for a long time.

**In *Major Robert*, there are composites with more than 100 elements. Is that kind of complex shot still being done?**

Oh, sure, and that's another example where traditional optics are more efficient.

**Give us an example where something would be more practical or possible to do digitally than in actual plates.**

In *Back to the Future-Part II*, when Michael Fox is playing through generations of a family sitting around a table. We start to see him with a sign of the art department. It took months. Something like this could very properly be done by keying the image digitally and saving time you don't want.

**What kinds of backgrounds are you looking for in computer operators?**

We are really looking for an eclectic mix. We have people from optics and retouching, but also people from computer art, restaurant/campfire people with heavy experience. This is an extension of conventional techniques. For years, optical people have been saying, I wish I could extend that edge. You have to know what you want to do, why and when it's needed. That's why we're mixing people from different disciplines and extending their capabilities.

**Over the years, are you going to find that the most talented new people will want to work in this area, and, if so, where will the next generation of optical camera people come from?**

This type of work requires a hands-on ability. It's very much a craft, and in any craft knowledge and experience are advantages. So people with good optical experience will be that much more valuable.

**Do you see digital image capture becoming a future reality?**

Put it another way: I can take any advantage not using film as a recording medium. You will always have a better picture with a larger format. That's just like a better storyline will make a movie more interesting. Digital technology isn't a panacea. It doesn't mean you can do anything. It means you can solve problems you couldn't solve as easily before. However, there are limits and constraints.

**How important is it to have a digital picture standard?**

I'm not sure. As long as we are inputting and outputting to and from film, it might not be that important to us.

**Is there any danger of digital technology advancing to the point where it used to be regarded as the unknown and everyone is doing the same things?**

There is no reason why it should. That's kind of a cut and paste and more than anything else. What we are doing is realizing the director's vision. It was hard to do the Monty Python work from working on *Ghosts*, I would have been free

times as many, and we probably could have done some things that the director would have thought were impossible. The director was already thinking in terms of effects that were appropriate for digital. He asked to have created by machine. It always starts with a desire, and the more tools you have, the more you can create. How far can you look ahead into the next decade in terms of applying this technology?

I wouldn't attempt to do that other than to say I can see some of the freedom that the video people have had being given to film directors, and not just for blockbusters. It might have a bigger impact on films that don't have gigantic budgets.

1. *Monthly* front page, dated July 87
2. ILM has earned 10 Oscars for visual effects for *The Abyss*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, *Return of the Jedi*, *The Ewok Adventure*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. There were other Oscar nominations for *Close Encounters*, *Pollux*, *Top Gun*, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, and *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*. In addition, ILM has received four technical achievement awards from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. ILM also won five awards from BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) for work on the feature film *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, *The Princess Bride*, *The Witches of Eastwick*, *Pollux*, and *Return of the Jedi*. There were 10th nominations for *Back to the Future*. ILM has also been nominated for visual effects for *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* and for *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.

## NOTE

The changes taking place in film and related technologies are significant and, as they are not being covered elsewhere, *Cinema Papers* is planning some changes to this section of the magazine. As of the next issue, it will be attempting to provide an expanded film-oriented section of new technology, product information and user comment that should address some of the needs of the Australian film industry. If you have information that you believe will be of interest, please contact Fred Harden at the *Cinema Papers* office or at P.O. Box 33, Albert Park 3206.



## ABOUT ANDREI TARKOVSKY

Compiled by Marina Tarkovskaya. Translated from Russian by Pogreba/Publishers' Mission. 2004. 342 pp., pb. \$27.95 (harpur).

## TARKOVSKY: CINEMA AS POETRY

Miya Tarkovskaya. Translated by Aleksandra Kharin. An introduction by Aleksandra Kharin. Oxford and Peterborough: 1999. 172 pp. Hb. \$35.00. pb. \$19.95.

## TIME WITHIN TIME: THE DIARIES 1970-1986

Andrei Tarkovsky. Translated by Kelly Hunter. With Sergei Gerasimov. 1991. 322 pp. Hb. \$29 (harpur).

## SLAVES TARKOVSKY

The Russian "glasnost" derives from a word which can be translated as "to publish" or "to make known" and certainly in the past few years the Soviets have taken responsibility much of their history and culture, which, while extremely important, has been suppressed for too long, a fact which has inevitably benefited the West. The artistic achievements of Soviet Russia have been rewriting all the prevalent stuff, presenting some surprises and occasional revelations.

Although the films of Andrei Tarkovsky have never really been "looked up", he remained for a long time a controversial name in the Soviet Union, particularly after his exile in 1979. Now several publications about his life and work have become available, both in the Soviet Union and abroad. One of the most fascinating is *About Andrei Tarkovsky*, an autobiographical book, volume of art imitations and anecdotes translated and published in the Soviet Union. Compiled by Tarkovsky's sister Marina, it is an intriguing combination of diary entries, poems, fictional and philosophical narratives, recollections of dreams, and accounts of journeys

and drinking sessions and, of course, the making of Tarkovsky's films. These diverse articles have been written in a highly personal emotional and often poetic style over the top manner by Tarkovsky's friends, family and colleagues. What unites their authors is that at one time or another, they were all closely involved with Tarkovsky in various ways.

Among the more interesting articles in this collection is the account of Tarkovsky's birth and early childhood, reconstructed from his notes in a special diary for mother and father, Anna Tarkovskaya (the poet) and kept for him. The peace, lyrical and full of nostalgia, nostalgia being one of the more prominent features of this book, however, there is little significance in this story being about Tarkovsky, rather, it is a piece about Russian life in the early 1930s.

The articles by actors in Tarkovsky's films occupy the greater part of the book and their authors speak just as much of themselves as of their beloved "master" and "master" is how he is mostly represented. It seems as if Tarkovsky undergoes a type of an artistic apotheosis in their words: throughout the book he is also compared to such figures as Christ and St. John, and to various forms of sanctified. These words from Marina Burlyak, who played Ivan in *Andrei Rublyov*, largely turn up the general sentiment of most outputs in this book.

When we met it was late at first sight. He was to become a strong and constant in men who were exactly what I wanted: tough, kind, and capable of putting others at ease with the light touch. He was the absolute center after which the group, a group everyone respected. (p. 710)

Yes, I love Andrei. I love his terrible qualities and his love. (p. 102)

The "terrible qualities" of Tarkovsky's personality are also outlined by many, but not

the book, some of the articles are addressed to his ghost, and those who feel they might have wronged him while he was alive tend to be more than apologetic. All these worthy and otherwise welcome ideas for a thrilling and emotional read.

Inevitably, much of the narrative centers on the Russian stress of Tarkovsky and his work. It should almost be possible to write the book as "Andrei Tarkovsky and Mother Russia." The atmosphere set up by the book is intensely one of Russian nostalgia, talks about Moscow conversations at bedtime, drinking and other playing parties at various country houses, swimming in the rivers of Russian forests, the changing of the seasons and the overwhelming, total sense of invasion of the Russian spirit in this atmosphere that most articles claim, Tarkovsky should have never left. Several imply that, for Tarkovsky, leaving Russia was suicide.

However, personal and emotional sentiments aside, Andrei Tarkovsky was a filmmaker and, as the book continuously insists, one of the greatest, if not in the history of world cinema, then certainly in the history of Russian cinema. The brightly and detailed accounts of Tarkovsky at work should point to be a veritable filmmaker's delight. The most recall conversations, fights, love, most things, laughter and exclamation as they tell of the filming of various scenes. Sometimes, authors' descriptions find themselves evaluate the pressures of working with an impressionistic genius, whom they believed, as he did himself, to be the best there is prophetic in modern Russia. The candour is always unsettling and fascinating, revealing a world which existed for a split fraction of time, a world now vanished along with his dreams. Andrei Tarkovsky greatly influenced many lives that became caught in the web of his fantastic



world and the book is a testament to this.

Not all of the articles have been written by Russians. The last part of the book is written by the members of the cast and crew of *The Shipmate*, and there is also a piece by Miyazaki Shunzo and a camera for a documentary about Tarkovsky's exile and death by Risto Piironen.

Inconceivable, it is not at all necessary to have been either way at Tarkovsky's films to be able to read and appreciate this book. It reads as a type of a post-modern novel about a Russian filmmaker: his, from the time (at) before his birth to the time of (and most provocatively so) his death. There is not even a brief reference of an attempt to read his films and then to rereading.

The impossibility, in any the least, translation of most of the articles is not so much annoying as amusing and quiet. As well, the amount of types and merged words points to a technical proficiency skilled English-lexicon (well-learned in the great publishing house of Progress Publishers, Moscow).

A much less interesting or beneficial volume is the collection of critical (and the description is questionable) essays by Miro Turovskiy, an apparently leading Soviet critic who claims to have been a close associate of Tarkovsky's. Turovskiy's *Stories as Poetry*, Turovskiy writes, is nothing more than "the spontaneous reactions of one classmate" (sic), but he suggests a lot of pompous. She attempts and fails to sound theoretical. The most redeeming feature of the theoretical aspect of this book is the introduction to the *Prayer* written by his Christian. The rest is mostly a rather tedious reading of the plots of Tarkovsky's films.

By and large, Turovskiy approaches the films as if they were novels and what is essentially attempts to interpret them while describing the plot of each. His reason for the choice of the possible difficulties in her approach, and while welcoming to be preoccupied with the "formalistic load" of the films, she is prompt to state that "The stylistic help of the meanings (in the films) is weaker than any expression of it in words could convey." One cannot help but ask: Why then did she invest centuries on that task? Much of her discussion centers on the exposition and analysis of the material "models" in the films, motifs through which she attempts to write the entire Tarkovsky oeuvre. Not only is her analysis primitive in the style of "Tarkovsky for the layman" or indeed "laymanism," but she attempts to make an images theory, rather than visually only the formal mention is made of cinematic style, of pace, images, etc. etc. The basic reason of the critical is to tell you that this is what you see and that is what it means.

Even more disturbing is her book's approach to Tarkovsky in political matters. Tarkovsky's own attitude towards women and female personae in his films was, if not misogynistic, then at least highly dubious. Tarkovsky does not begin to question Tarkovsky's exploration of the "mother-to-the-land Russian" patriarchal bond, she goes along with his obvious intent

in his often offensive suggestions about women. I do not wish to discredit the entire female population of the USSR by suggesting that questioning such matters might be equivalent to their "whorehouse role to include only that Turovskiy might find feminist discourse quite and lovely in a discussion about Tarkovsky's work.

Overall, the book is poorly structured. The explanation for this is given early on when it states that the book is a mixture of different essays written over the entire span of Tarkovsky's career and collected for this publication. The explanation, however, is inadequate as there are several repetitive passages. Obviously, she borrowed from her earlier essays in the later ones, and these could have been edited out without too much disturbance to the text as a whole.

On a final note, Tarkovsky's diaries have also been recently published inside by Sergei Bokaia. It is called *Time Within Time* and contains all his dates, including some handwritten pages and sketches from 1955 to 1985, a 1986 interview for *The Soviet* and various recorded conversations and thoughts on some of his films and plays. The book also contains a large collection of photographs.

But it is in a word image by the painter Sharovtchikovskiy, painted about Tarkovsky that one continually returns.

When, in the telephone conversation with Mirra, I asked her whether they had a country house and where (she said with her hope that there was still some bit of Andrei, being some where without some historical source of the end of the century in Pershing, some place from a deep path with a wooden board separating oneself, pp. 217-78).

## A CRITICAL CINEMA: INTERVIEWS WITH INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS

Scott MacDonald, University of California Press Berkeley, 1984, 419 pp., pb. 19.95

JOHN CORMACK

Since the late 1970s Scott MacDonald has been steadily acquiring a substantial critical reputation as a dedicated and insightful scholar of the American avant-garde.

Anyone who is familiar with such avant-garde art, culture, and film (particularly as discussed in *Cinema Journal*, *Plex Quarterly*, *Artforum*, *Movie*, *Angel*, *Millennium* and *October*) will recognize his name because of his many independent films that have been doing with some of the leading practitioners of independent cinema. *A Critical Cinema* is a wide-ranging and representative sample of these comprehensive and enlightening interviews.

MacDonald's interviews manifest a well-prepared theoretical understanding of the dominant theoretical codes of mainstream narrative cinema as indicated in their own film profiles, and offer many critical insights into their own backgrounds, influences, major conceptual, cultural and aesthetic values and the overall situation of independent cinema in contemporary American society.

To begin with, all of MacDonald's interviews represent many different forms and traditions of American avant-garde cinema, as "avant-garde" "experimental" narrative "trash" film "punk film" "dusty film" and "recycled cinema." MacDonald's subjects include such key experimental filmmakers as Hollis Frampton, Larry Gish, Carolin Schreier, William S. Dyer, Mark B. and Stuart B. Jahn, Waters, Bruce Connor, Barbara Mangano and Manuel De Landa. All of MacDonald's interviews, through their time, capture avant-garde cinema's conventional modes of representation. What is stressed (in a not capital) is how these particular avant-garde filmmakers put into effect the underlying cultural, institutional and theoretical emphasis of mainstream narrative cinema and discontinue disorientation. Their films embody all the more characteristic conceptual and stylistic preoccupations that form the American avant-garde cinema since the 1940s.

At this juncture we should examine what MacDonald means by the term "critical cinema" as it captures his main observations and arguments about the various filmmakers who make up his book. For the author, "critical cinema" can be seen to be synonymous with terms like "underground cinema," the New American Cinema, "experimental cinema" and "avant-garde cinema." In other words, for MacDonald "critical cinema" refers to a number of forms of non-commercial and semi-commercial filmmaking that have been shadowing the history of American popular cinema for the past four decades.

In a MacDonald's contention that the most interesting and useful film critical insights to have emerged during recent years have been coming not so much from within his theory as such, but more specifically from that remarkable

body of American independent films which has been designated by critics, filmmakers and theorists as "critical cinema." Having said this, it should be pointed out that, aside from their critical edge as radical media-culture texts, these diverse films are grounded on a conceptual individualistic spirit that belies the otherwise value of creating art for oneself to communicate personal feelings and ideas to the world at large. These specific individualistic qualities of critical cinema were ob-



served by William Burroughs nearly a decade ago.

Hollywood does use the danger motif in these experiments, only character can play "You can be your own God. And since the camera and recorder are simply other gods, enter some of the human nervous system: you can make your own movies and make them better without a camera or recorder. In fact you have to. [Thesis: *Movie's*] Introduction to *Cinepan Cinema Catalog* 3 (1992).

MacDonald delineates three broad traditions in critical cinema: (a) *cinéma*—these films embrace certain forms and contents of cinematic film and, at the same time, resist critical disengagement from their very own aims; (b) *autobiographical*—these films focus on the filmmaker as the subject of the film and, in the process, critique the traditional concepts of subjecting and character as mainstream narrative cinema; and (c) *theoretical*—these films strongly characterize development and plot as established in popular narrative cinema and focus on its mechanical, classical techniques and structural structures. All three modes of avant-garde cinema have developed at the same time and presented the filmmaker concerned have showed from one group to her during their careers as artists. The largest group of filmmakers centers on the cinematic form for thinking, and the autobiographical and the radical forms have at most a tiny group of interested enthusiasts.

George Kuchar is a fine example of the *cinéma* approach. Since the late 1950s, George and his wife Katherin produced private films more so with their friends and neighbors in the Bronx. Many of their films (including George Kuchar's subsequent films) juxtapose cinematic and popular commercial cinema's more melodramatic genres and (autobiographic) genre captions. What distinguishes their work is their ability to define the gap between Hollywood's illusion of reality and everyday life. Kuchar's characters do experience melodramatic situations like their cinematic counterparts but, on average, everyday characters whose dreams and lives have been stamped by prevailing Hollywood illusions. The filmmaker mode includes such key figures as Kenneth Anger, Jack Smith, Andy Warhol, John Waters and the mid-to-late "Too Punk" or "New Wave" filmmakers like the Be and Veronique Dels.

The autobiographical mode endures the melodramatic concerns and forms of commercial cinema, but it suggests the impact that popular narrative films have on our film consciousness as expressed by the textual configurations in the works of the diverse exemplars of this particular form of critical cinema also known as *cinéma*. *Autobiographical* films as the American neo-avant-garde form a counterpart of what P. Adams Sitney has called "visionary film" and like most kinds of critical cinema, are inextricably related to painting, poetry and fiction. As Sitney has suggested, the films of Stan Brakhage, Gregory Markopoulos, Ron Rice, Robert Nelson and Kenneth Anger have all had connections to the western poetic tradition of the artist as poet. These filmmakers create

artistic and mental states that they have experienced or are experiencing.

Charles Schneerson is representative of the autobiographical form of avant-garde filmmaking in her direct representation of her personal life and the tragedy endures the dramatical conventions of commercial cinema in the way it "revents" the personal lives of main characters. Schneerson (like Robert Flac) chooses elements that are explicitly evident in mainstream popular film elements that also focus her other activities as a major multidimensional artist: performance, photo-text works, painting and writing. Specifically, Schneerson's films focus on the intimate personal moments of her life and sexuality and, generally speaking, her autobiographical personalism mirror the tug-of-war of sexual politics in post-war American society. At first glance, a slight seems that Schneerson's cinema is confined to the codes of mainstream cinema (and pornography) but it clearly becomes evident that her films are innovative examples of the autobiographical mode and are influential works for subsequent developments in critical cinema.

Finally, the theoretical mode purposely avoids the traditional conventions and language of character, narrative and plot of mainstream cinema. The filmmaker who belongs to this particular form of American avant-garde cinema are interested in articulating new definitions of space, time and imagery in their systematic explorations of the formal properties of the medium of film itself. It plays to reflect that the theoretical film is used to be valued more than just as a technical experiment. These filmmakers are also concerned with the literary order of time, space and of cinema as a social cultural product functioning in our material world. Although theoretical films are diverse in character, what unites them is their common project of setting up a grid system (as William S. Burroughs a highly influential Marxist in recording his system studies) whereby the filmmaker is able to conceptualize and gauge a series of specific developments.

Holbe Frumpton is arguably one of the most challenging and intellectually stimulating figures of the theoretical stage. What characterizes Frumpton's humorous profile films is his systematic and pedagogical examination of the very processes of conceptualization and thinking. Coming from a fine arts background, Frumpton was a major proponent in the history of avant-garde cinema, whose progression from short films to the longer experimental works like *Zero Length* (1967) and *Repeating* (1967-70) reinvigorates the filmmaker's and audience's capacity for all and guaging, and reflects his enormous breadth of reading (philosophy, history, philosophy, science, mathematics and literature). Influenced by the modernists such as Bergson, Joyce and Pound, Frumpton believed in creating films that engage the aesthetic sense, the intellect and the emotional intelligence. Despite Frumpton's reputation as a "genius," his movies are structured in the boldest and critical cinema would be afraid of a mass film audience and they are

arguably as much as they are completely stimulating.

A Critical Cinema is a necessary and rewarding book to read for anyone who is not merely concerned with avant-garde cinema as it developed in America since the 1940s. Each interview is provided by a valuable introduction to the filmmaker's work and possesses detailed bibliographies and filmographies. It is modest in its conceptual ambitions as a critical film and small compilation but its defined objectives in mapping out the aesthetic, cultural and textual contours of American avant-garde cinema. MacDonald's style of interviewing is an absolutely non-dogmatic and creative in allowing opportunities for his interviewees to express themselves on a wide range of related topics. Given the current theoretical studies that are coming from American university presses on avant-garde filmmaking, *Critical Cinema* is a long addition to the growing list and deserves a place somewhere next to our copies of Jonathan Rosenbaum and David Bordwell's textbooks bearing the same name. *Film: The First Line* published respectively in 1982 and 1984. Speaking of which, whatever happened to the promised annual series on independent cinema?

## HANDHELD IN HOLLYWOOD: FIVE BLACK MASK WRITERS AND THE MOVIES

David M. Fleming, *Owen State University*, *Piquette, Ohio* 44671-1930, 60 pp., \$24.95.

RAPHAEL CAPUTO

With *Handheld in Hollywood*, the reader's expectation is split between what is on offer and what actually gets delivered. On the one hand, the book is appealing in that it combines illuminating the often neglected art of the screenplay with more generally the solutions of film to literature. This is especially appealing given that the study is specifically focused on two writers who made a name for themselves through the 1930s and 40s with the original pulp magazine *Black Mask* (One of the featured writers, Horace McCoy, would be familiar to many of the readers of *Cinema Papers*; the others include Eric Taylor, Peter Rabe, Dwight V. Boeckman and John K. Butler.)

On the other hand, the form and substance of the goods delivered amounts to a rather modest of these writers' lives in Hollywood, which is situated on some level against with a prefabricated inventory of screen credits and production information. This is only welcome because, as the introduction quite rightly states, "for too long writers have been almost completely ignored in favor of film directors in terms of contributions to the style and content of Hollywood film" (p. 5). What author David M. Fleming at least is that the *Black Mask* legacy on Hollywood may amount further that the noted contributions of Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett and a few others. The phrase far in the first paper treatment can go.

What will help in the five chapters devoted to each writer is to actually introduce and support an argument for what the legacy can

style of an aesthetic or stylistic writing when transposed to Hollywood. One consistent feature of note for instance, is that the five writers highlighted, despite greater aspirations, worked in the loosely edged perennially flicke area of the genres.

On a lesser scale, Chandler, Hammett were the purveyors laughter to all concerned in consequence they improved they could write (whether it had been played before novels, or newspaper articles) and would work cheap (p. 4)

As is suggested, the contributions of this contingent were workmanlike, rather than on the by virtue of reputation. A quick perusal of their screenwriting output (initially, examples of their contributions were for B pictures) shows this out further.

But it's not a terrible readability that lags up their careers. On the surface, the conditions of the screenwriter's office made one's life more tolerable than another, but the work itself was equally as hard (an economic) mine field for distinctive aspects of one's mind expression. With all the contrary, doubt I mean afforded to even the vaguest possibility of innovative forms of visual expression or technique that may have been yielded by the literary devices of writers who were specifically identified with a school. For this reason, the reader is largely burdened by stodgy, formulaic descriptions of thematic concerns.

There is a strong incongruity between the stated and implied objectives set out in the introduction and the work done in each chapter on each writer. The introduction is somewhat brief, yet it still manages to establish a worthy proposal for further research. First, although relying on the words of Joseph T. Liner, the most influential of the Black Mask editors, Witt nonetheless identifies the "hard-boiled" style.

The formula of public, emphatic criticism and the degradation of literary forms in behavior over time, is not in doubt. In this case, the formulaic style is the main theme, the formulaic style is the main theme, the formulaic style is the main theme. [...] Such descriptive treatment comprises a hard-boiled style [...] a high employment of the language of dialogue and subtext in their own words and action. To this may be added a very fast tempo, attained in part by typical economy of expression which, probably, has made the difference of writing in other fields. (p. 4)

Witt then identifies a historical juncture: the development of the "hard-boiled" style resulted directly at the same time as the arrival of sound to motion pictures. The technological changes to the filmmaking craft wrought significant effects on the screen-writing craft; henceforth,



Chandler, Hammett and the five writers featured in this book.

From what Witt has laid out here (even by going on the reputation of Chandler and Hammett alone, and although they are not included in this study, they still form part of a school), one can safely assume that this contingent would have had a significant effect on the position through their great style. But Witt doesn't seem at all hesitant to organizing this assumption into a reliable argument, which in turn would be excessive in examining the screenwriting craft via the comparative relationship between film and literature.

Witt is too literal-minded. What starts off as an intriguing assumption remains an assumption in the study that follows. Not one of the chapters provides enough evidence of the "hard-boiled" style in the screen work of the five writers. Witt merely carries the assumption over from his introduction as though it were a self-evident fact. All that was an after-the-fact exercise, streamlined, cataloguing exercise.

To ease the chapter on Hammett's legacy as

an example, it seems to make very little difference to Witt that McCloy sometimes co-wrote or provided original scripts, or had adapted for the screen work of another author, or even to discuss how McCloy's perceptions were brought to film ("They Shoot Horses, Don't They?" and "Man Tomorrow Goodbye"), none of which McCloy adapted. All gets levelled out to something along the lines of McCloy contributed to such-and-such a film for such-and-such a studio and the film dealt with such-and-such a topic. The monotonous manner by which Witt treats his subject is a constant of his reliance on what seems to be second-hand research material. Hence, McCloy's contribution to *Macomber* Ray's *The Lucky Man* amounts to:

*The Lucky Man* is an excellent film with good performances by the principals and a terrific script (as well as competent direction) by Nichols (p. 34)

And enter some similar formulaic verbiage about *Knickerbocker* below, for conclusion:

*The Lucky Man* is a more "adult film" than some, where the women the men are competing for is less obvious; there is no kidnapping, a *Knickerbocker* and the overall value of the film is depicted at much darker times (p. 35)

There is as far as evidence of a discernable style given for Witt, and it is in the kind of writing that stems from research material that looks like it was culled from press information provided by the studios.

On the whole, it is obvious Witt would have fared better with a comparative analysis of the screenplays, the films, the writers' novels and stories, as well as the adaptations of their own stories. If any.

It there was a special affinity between the coming of sound, the development of the "hard-boiled" school, and the types of films produced in Hollywood as a certain point in time, it is hardly evident by what has been delivered. At best, *Hardboiled in Hollywood* is a mildly engaging reference guide.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

COMPILED BY RAFAELLE CAPUTO AND KERRIE HARRISON

### AN ACTOR'S GUIDE TO GETTING WORK

Simon Dunmore. Paperback. London: 1997. 299 pp., pp. xv + 273 pp.

The interesting thing about this guide is that it is written from the viewpoint of a director, with useful ideas on how directors operate when choosing actors for their productions. While it covers the basics—studios, training, getting an agent, attending and preparing auditions, etc.—Dunmore also makes thoughtful suggestions on dealing with rejection and nerves, and creating a rapport with interviewers, among other things. Although written for professional and would-be actors, it contains useful information for anyone seeking employment (especially the chapters on interviews and letter writing). Dunmore claims this guide is not complete, but it certainly is a great start.

### A PEAK OF FILMS

John Howard Reed. Hardcover. Sydney: 1997. 204 pp., pp. xv + 240.

All reference books have an linking topic or theme that allows for unity of purpose. Here on television, Academy Award-winning films, films of the 1940s, foreign films, whatever, it is what determines either inclusion or exclusion of films.

Unlike previous volumes in Reed's series, *Volume Eleven* is balanced for there is no clearly perceived theme. The book provides all the essential details and more, but the title says little by way of indicating to the reader a particular interest. It appears that the unity of purpose here is in producing a reference book for the sake of producing a reference book.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

# TOM HAYDON LEE REMICK



**TOM HAYDON 1938 – 1991**  
JON JUBSTON

**T**om Haydon, who died of cancer in July, will be sadly missed by his many friends and filmmaking colleagues. Not only will he be remembered for such incisive and controversial films as *The Last Tomorrow* (1978), people will recall the very prominent role he played in promoting and developing the standing of documentary film production generally.

Three weeks before he died, the Australian Film Radio & Television School organised a moving testimonial for Haydon. A 15 minute montage of Haydon's work was screened and speeches were made by anthropologist Rhys Jones, ex-Film Australia chief, Ron Hughes, writer Michael Bradley, and filmmakers Tom Mannfield, Gailen Cooke and Ray Beattie. The event proved extremely successful and was a rare opportunity where people got together to bury their differences.

Haydon began his professional filmmaking career in 1960, soon after graduating from the University of Sydney with a BA Honours degree in History. He joined the ABC as a specialist trainee in the Education Department, where he worked producing and directing children's programmes. Over the next four years he progressed rapidly to making ten documentaries

invisibly. After arriving in England in 1968, he led the film with a dramatic documentary *The British Empire: Beyond the Black Stump*. This film – a black turned-up episode of the myth of British colonization enshrined in Australian history – caused massive controversy both in Britain and Australia. One newspaper ran a byline: "With a friend like Haydon who needs an enemy?" An Australian correspondent wrote for weeks in *The Times* and the film was the subject of a debate in the House of Lords. "How could you expect an otherwise spiritual landlord like Lord Clifford of Chudleigh (who attacked the film in the House of Lords) understand how truly Australian Haydon's film is?" wrote Gail Anderson in *The Bulletin*.

But probably the film which still continues to arouse huge controversy is Haydon's *The Last Tomorrow*. This feature length film, made in 1978, methodically and meticulously built a case which shocked the establishment by British colonists of the Tasmanian Aboriginal race in the early part of the 19th century. The film was very popular with audiences, showing at 17 international film festivals and selling to television in 22 countries. On the Ten Network in Australia it rated 9th, winning the night. Many people felt it was a compelling documentary methodically analysing the horror of this genocide, but others, especially prominent blacks,

felt he had gone too far and ignored a vibrant Aboriginal community still surviving in Tasmania.

On his return to Australia in 1980, Tom Haydon devoted himself to executive roles where he supervised and produced films, and inaugurated new programmes of production. These included a number of documentary series, such as *Changing Australia* and *Two Nations*. Plans of Hong Kong, as well as the prime time series *Real Life*, which has never had a television release. During that time, Haydon was appointed as Director of the National Program at Film Australia, where he worked for three years.

Haydon had an active role in film industry affairs and became Chairman of the Documentary Division and Vice-President of the Screen Producers Association of Australia. He played a leading part in selecting 1984 tax concessions for film investments, lobbying hard to ensure that they also applied to documentary. However, he quickly became disillusioned with the scheme which he and colleagues, including myself, believed discriminated against committed social documentary. This concern gave birth to what many believe to be Tom Haydon's single biggest achievement, the Documentary Fellowship Scheme.

In 1984, Haydon approached Malcolm Smith, then the General Manager of the Australian Film Commission, with a proposal to set up a scheme which would "recognize the just piece of innovation and excellence in documentary film". The idea took fire within the AFC and was quickly implemented. Two fellowships were to be awarded to recognized documentary filmmakers (or filmmaking teams) each year, giving them the freedom to work on projects of their own choosing. A number of memorable films were produced, including *Wag Country* and *Native Ambition* (Joe Looney's *Neighbours*). As one of the early beneficiaries of the scheme (*Friends & Enemies*) I valued the ability to be able to work at my own pace and develop a documentary style outside television imposed restrictions. Ironically, the AFC eventually became a partner in the scheme as part of its then increasing commitment to independent documentary.

The fellowships helped consolidate the profile and place of the social documentary. The scheme, however, has now been discontinued. The progressive development of a unique documentary tradition which is strong at the world level will inevitably suffer.

While involved in its managerial roles, Haydon's work in the 1980s as an independent





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**PLATE 11**  
**FIGURE 11-1**

1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 26

[illegible]

**Abstract**

<b>FMSI company</b>	Central Park Films
<b>Pre-production</b>	March 1, 2004-4
<b>Production</b>	March 1 - 4 weeks
<b>Principal location</b>	
<b>Director</b>	David Zucker
<b>Producer</b>	George Fenton
<b>Screenplay</b>	David Zucker
<b>Star</b>	James Van Der Beek
<b>Soundtrack(s)</b>	Linkin Park
<b>Editor</b>	Mark Pegg
<b>Final designer</b>	Kevin Kline
<b>Executive producer</b>	Sam Johnston
<b>Composer</b>	David Zucker

<b>Planning and Development</b>	
Chairman	LEO BARNETT, E. A. Smith
<b>Production Office</b>	
Project manager	Patricia L. Pearson
Project art and text manager	Julianne Van Hagen
Production manager	Robert Montgomery
Production assistant	William Cameron
Print accountant	Shirley L. Smith
<b>Business Office</b>	
Business manager	James P. Pearson
Clipping reader	Robert Montgomery
Key copy	Shirley L. Smith
Admin. staff	Shirley L. Smith
Clerical	Shirley L. Smith
Secret. staff	Shirley L. Smith
<b>Research Staff</b>	
1st and 2nd class	Shirley L. Smith
3rd and 4th class	Shirley L. Smith
5th and 6th class	Shirley L. Smith
7th and 8th class	Shirley L. Smith
9th and 10th class	Shirley L. Smith
11th and 12th class	Shirley L. Smith
13th and 14th class	Shirley L. Smith
15th and 16th class	Shirley L. Smith
17th and 18th class	Shirley L. Smith
19th and 20th class	Shirley L. Smith
21st and 22nd class	Shirley L. Smith
23rd and 24th class	Shirley L. Smith
25th and 26th class	Shirley L. Smith
27th and 28th class	Shirley L. Smith
29th and 30th class	Shirley L. Smith
31st and 32nd class	Shirley L. Smith
33rd and 34th class	Shirley L. Smith
35th and 36th class	Shirley L. Smith
37th and 38th class	Shirley L. Smith
39th and 40th class	Shirley L. Smith
41st and 42nd class	Shirley L. Smith
43rd and 44th class	Shirley L. Smith
45th and 46th class	Shirley L. Smith
47th and 48th class	Shirley L. Smith
49th and 50th class	Shirley L. Smith
51st and 52nd class	Shirley L. Smith
53rd and 54th class	Shirley L. Smith
55th and 56th class	Shirley L. Smith
57th and 58th class	Shirley L. Smith
59th and 60th class	Shirley L. Smith
61st and 62nd class	Shirley L. Smith
63rd and 64th class	Shirley L. Smith
65th and 66th class	Shirley L. Smith
67th and 68th class	Shirley L. Smith
69th and 70th class	Shirley L. Smith
71st and 72nd class	Shirley L. Smith
73rd and 74th class	Shirley L. Smith
75th and 76th class	Shirley L. Smith
77th and 78th class	Shirley L. Smith
79th and 80th class	Shirley L. Smith
81st and 82nd class	Shirley L. Smith
83rd and 84th class	Shirley L. Smith
85th and 86th class	Shirley L. Smith
87th and 88th class	Shirley L. Smith
89th and 90th class	Shirley L. Smith
91st and 92nd class	Shirley L. Smith
93rd and 94th class	Shirley L. Smith
95th and 96th class	Shirley L. Smith
97th and 98th class	Shirley L. Smith
99th and 100th class	Shirley L. Smith

Bill (attorney) wife	Philip (in Michigan)
Clairling	Raymond (Cook)
Art (Superman)	
Art (brother)	Ben (brother)
Art (step) summer	Charles (brother)
Prager (super)	James (brother)
Wanda (sister)	
Bill (brother) super	Tom (brother)
Shirley (sister) wife	Gregory (brother)
Red (personification)	
Ann (sister)	Joel (brother)
Ophelia	Cliff (brother)
Laboratory	Rita (brother)
Bag (swimming)	Cliff (brother)
Shooting (mode)	Rita (brother)
Marketing	
Fisher (brother)	Gene (brother)

1000 1000 1000 1000

Local company	(N/A)
Budget	Revised \$100
Top production	Ed Miller
Production	Arthur
Post production	William
Philosophical Goals	None
Director	Alan Turner
Producers	Gene Skarney
Executive producers	Patric Manning, Dwight
	James Shaw
	Gene Skarney
	Patric Manning
Scripted film	Patric Manning
Scripted or unscripted	Alan Turner
Screenplay by	Alan Turner
Script editor	Patric Manning
Camera	William
Sound (No details supplied)	AS mixer
<p><b>Synopsis:</b> Although involving investigations, the television series depicts the early days of the country. Twelve guests will be stopped with a policy. After attempts at becoming a great filmmaker, he must learn that his film is not necessarily what he wants it to be, that it is worth making anyway.</p>	
<p align="center"><b>THE WESTPHALIAN INC.</b></p>	
Local or	Revised \$100
Company	Patric Manning
Production	William
Production	Arthur
Post production	William
Philosophical Goals	None
Director	Alan Turner
Producers	Gene Skarney
Executive producers	Patric Manning, Dwight
	James Shaw
	Gene Skarney
	Patric Manning
Scripted film	Patric Manning
Scripted or unscripted	Alan Turner
Screenplay by	Alan Turner
Script editor	Patric Manning
Camera	William
Sound (No details supplied)	AS mixer

**Abstract**

Food company	Barbara Brummett
Oil company	Wittko Probst
	(Denver, 1986-87)
	Oct. - Nov. 1987
<b>Production</b>	
<b>Principal Credits</b>	
Screenplay	Yves Sureau
Production	Yves Sureau
Co-production	Yves Sureau
Exec. producer	Yves Sureau
Director	Yves Sureau
Other Credits	
International sales	Walter R.
Cast	Yves Sureau (lead role) (no other roles)
<b>Synopsis:</b>	A adventure comedy that takes an emergency rescue with little fun or money-making international sales credit when it is mostly for-profit.

**Abstract**

Food specialty	Grand Marquis (Hoffman)
Food company	Reynolds
Butter	50-117-148
Pre-production	10/1/82 - 1/15/83
Production	1/15/83 - 4/1/83
Post-production	4/1/83 - April 1983
<b>Principal Credits</b>	
Director	Paul Humeau
Producers	David Johnston Charles Marshall
Scriptwriter	David G. Brown
OGP	Sam Eastman
Storyboard sequence	Neal Little
Editor	Wynne Leung
Final director	Michael Phillips
Associate director	Guerrero Phillips
Composed	Allen Zavall
<b>Planning and Development</b>	
Script writer	Paul Humeau
Casting coordinator	Adrian Raposo
<b>Production Crew</b>	
Production office	Barbara Pan
Food service	Sam Thompson
Proprietor and	Dign-Brown
Food inventory	Robert Miller
Location manager	John James
Art director	Willy Jones

**PLATE 1**

[illegible]

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[illegible]

THE HOSPITALS IN

Prod. co.	Sheppan-La Messurier Films
Dist. company	Sheppan Films
Fin. production	198881—137000
Production	198881 85000
Post production	Arclivision
Principal credits	
Director	Ben El-Mechaie
Producer	Tamir Jassou













# TENEBRICOSE TEN

A PANEL OF TEN FILM REVIEWERS HAS RATED A SELECTION OF THE LATEST RELEASES ON A SCALE OF 0 TO 10, THE LATTER BEING THE OPTIMUM RATING (A DASH MEANS NOT SEEN). THE CRITICS ARE: BILL COLLINS (CHANNEL 5); THE ONLY MIRROR, SYDNEY; SAMIRA HILL (THE BULLETIN, SYDNEY); PAUL HARRIS (10P, THE AGE, MELBOURNE); IAN HUTCHINGS (SEVEN NETWORK, HORNBY-SH, MELBOURNE); STAN JAMES (THE AGE/ABC ADVERTISER); NED JULETT (THE AGE); ADRIAN MARTIN (AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS REVIEW, SYDNEY); TOM RYAN (3LO, THE SUNSHYR AGE, MELBOURNE); DAVID STRATHORN (KIMBERLY, SRS, SYDNEY); AND EVAN WILLIAMS (THE AUSTRALIAN, SYDNEY)

FILMTITLE Director	BILL COLLINS	SAMIRA HILL	PAUL HARRIS	IAN HUTCHINGS	STAN JAMES	NED JULETT	ADRIAN MARTIN	TOM RYAN	DAVID STRATHORN	EVAN WILLIAMS	ADRIAN
<b>BOBA</b> Euzheny Artyukhin	8	—	8	—	7	8	7	—	8	7	8.0
<b>BACKBAMT</b> Ben Howard	7	8	3	8	5	5	—	3	8	—	4.8
<b>BEAN RUE SAE</b> Tom Solovytz	—	—	8	—	—	8	—	8	8	8	8.8
<b>CITY SLICKERS</b> Ken Woodward	7	4	4	8	7	4	—	3	8	—	8.7
<b>DYING YOUNG</b> Joel Schumacher	8	2	2	8	3	3	—	1	1	—	3.1
<b>THE FIELD</b> Jim Sheridan	8	7	8	7	—	3	—	8	8	—	8.8
<b>GUILTY BY SUSPICION</b> Irwin Winkler	8	8	3	8	—	3	—	3	8	8	4.8
<b>HARDWARE</b> Richard Stanley	8	—	1	8	—	1	—	8	1	8	4.0
<b>HIDDEN HAVES</b> Michael Lachmann	8	2	—	8	2	—	8	8	—	—	3.8
<b>IN BED WITH MADONNA</b> (Interviews in the film) Adam Carlin	—	8	7	—	4	—	1	—	7	—	5.4
<b>LA DAME DES PINS</b> (Interviews) Bruce Barry	—	—	8	8	—	4	—	7	7	7	8.8
<b>LEONARD COVINGS GO AMERICA</b> Aki Kaurismäki	—	—	1	4	7	1	1	7	7	—	4.8
<b>MR &amp; MRS BRIDGE</b> James Ivory	—	8	8	8	—	8	—	—	8	8	5.8
<b>THE NAKED GUN 2 1/2</b> THE SMELL OF PEAN David Zucker	8	—	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	8	5.8
<b>NOSE BLANCHÉ</b> Jean-Claude Brisseau	—	—	8	8	—	8	8	1	—	—	4.2
<b>NOT WITHOUT MY DAUGHTER</b> Susan Gibson	8	—	2	8	8	8	8	—	8	—	4.7
<b>ONLY THE LONELY</b> Chris Columbus	8	—	1	4	8	8	1	2	4	—	4.0
<b>PROOF</b> Jonathan Demme	—	8	7	8	—	8	8	8	8	7	7.8
<b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> John Amos	8	8	8	—	—	8	8	8	8	8	8.4
<b>RESTORANTS AND BUILDINGSTERS ARE BORN</b> Tom Stoppard	8	8	1	8	—	8	8	7	8	8	5.8
<b>A STORY OF BOYS AND GIRLS</b> Pogo Arata	—	7	1	8	7	1	—	1	8	—	4.8
<b>TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY</b> James Cameron	8	—	7	8	8	—	—	7	8	8	7.8
<b>36 HP</b> Michael Apted	—	8	8	8	—	—	8	7	—	8	5.8
<b>THEJIMA &amp; LOUISE</b> Ralfie Scott	—	8	7	—	—	8	1	8	8	8	8.8
<b>TOO HOT TO HANDLE</b> Jerry Ross	8	—	—	8	3	8	—	3	4	8	4.8
<b>WHAT ABOUT BOB?</b> Frank Oz	8	—	—	3	4	8	—	—	8	—	4.4



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